

PLAYSTATION • SATURN • NINTENDO 64 • NEO GEO • 3DO • SNES • VIRTUAL BOY • GENESIS • ARCADE

GAMEFAN

NEXT GENERATION VIDEO GAME MAGAZINE

VOLUME 4 • ISSUE 8

SONY'S UNBELIEVABLE



CRASH BANDICOOT
SEVEN GLORIOUS
PAGES!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

PLAYSTATION:
TUNNEL B1
DISRUPTOR
TURNING ROAD
LAST CHAMBER
LEGACY OF KAIN
MX RACING
BLACK DAWN

SATURN:
THREE DIRTY
WARVES
POWERSLAVE
JUG TOO!
VIRTUA COP 2

NINTENDO 64:
SUPER MARIO 64
BREAK BOY



VF KIDS
PINT-SIZED
POWER!

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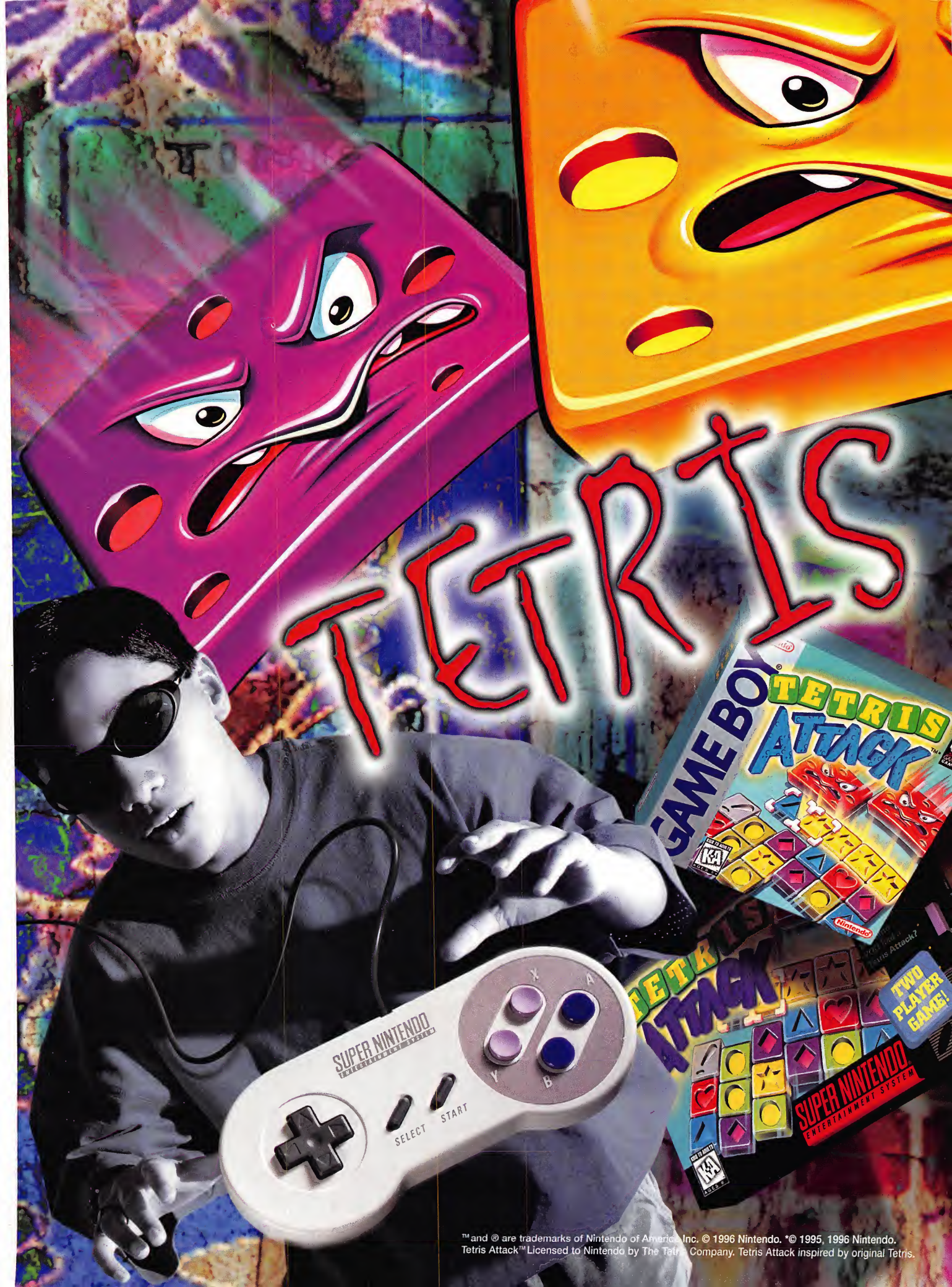


FIGHTING VIPERS
SATURN!



INSIDE GF SPORTS: V-TENNIS •
MLB PENNANT RACE • TRIPLE
PLAY '97 • FRANK THOMAS BIG
HURT BASEBALL • NBA ACTION •
NHL POWER PLAY • PLUS
PREVIEWS OF THE SUMMERS
HOTTEST GAMES!

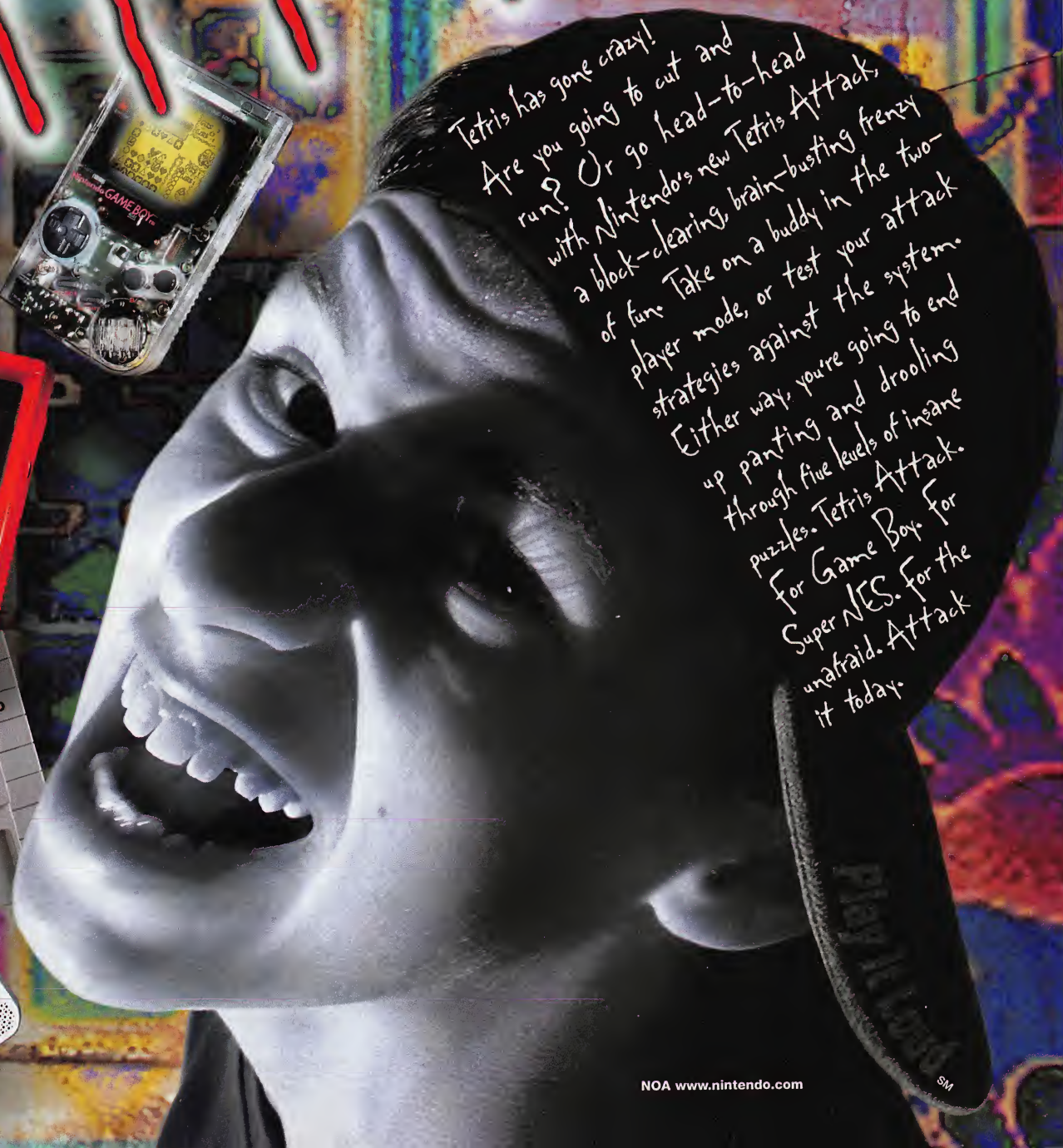




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Tetris has gone crazy!
Are you going to cut and
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of fun. Take on a buddy in the two-
player mode, or test your attack
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Either way, you're going to end
up panting and drooling
through five levels of insane
puzzles. Tetris Attack.
For Game Boy. For
Super NES. For the
unafraid. Attack
it today.

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AND LAUGHS ABOUT IT!

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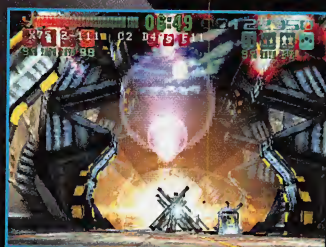
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COVER
STORY

WHO WILL
LAUGH
LAST?
NIGHTS,
CRASH
OR
MARIO?

GAMEFAN
original art by:



TERRY WOLFINGER

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STRAPPED TO YOU
IS A SPORT.**

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whatever Frank wants, Frank Gets...



Frank demanded motion-captured fielding and computer-rendered perfection before he would unleash his home run power!



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A large, detailed image of Frank Thomas in a black "BIG HURT" jersey and cap, holding a baseball bat, standing on a baseball field at dusk. The background shows a stadium filled with spectators under a purple and blue sky.

Frank wanted big technology to match his 2-time MVP-winning, power-hitting arms. He wanted 28 3-D rendered baseball stadiums to crank home runs. He wanted Motion Captured player sprites. He wanted authentic gameplay like pitchers losing arm strength. He wanted 6 modes of play, 9 pitch selections and 27 stat categories. And he wanted a ton of camera angles to check out the action. He got it... because whatever Frank wants Frank gets!



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A METROPOLIS PUBLICATION



It's amazing how fast our industry is changing. It wasn't long ago when Sega and Nintendo reigned supreme over the world of gaming, each with an impressive quiver of exclusive third parties and original titles. The big third party companies had dedicated, in-house development teams and pumped out sequel after sequel pledging their allegiance to one or the other giant.

Due, in part, to Sony's emergence as a superpower, all that is beginning to change. No longer do companies swear by one product. The Sony deal was just too attractive and now free agency is king.

While some TP's (mostly Japanese) still have in-house development, few develop solely on one platform and most games are farmed out to new developers hungry for success and bursting with talent. Most of them are being delivered directly to the Sony PlayStation.

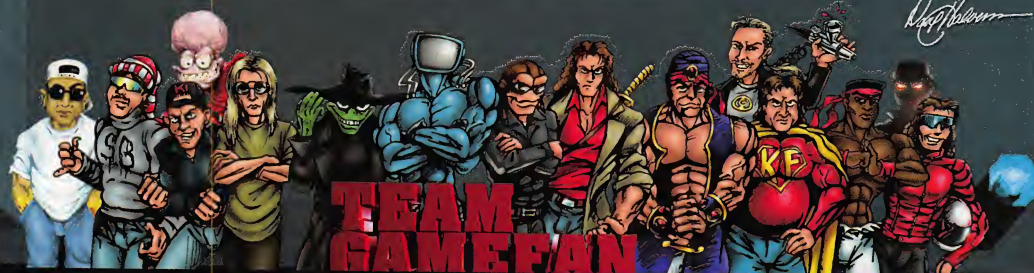
And we're not talking about predominantly Japanese development anymore. A few short years ago the best stuff came out of Japan... end of story. They had every genre covered.

While the best fighters and RPG's still do (and likely always will) come from Japan, the other genres are evolving through companies here and

abroad; like Naughty Dog, Lobotomy, and Neon via their respective publishers (Universal, PIE, and Ocean) to name only three of many. The three games represented in that small example are, respectively, *Crash Bandicoot* (Sony bought it), which obliterates all platformers by a scary margin, *Powerslave* (Sony can't buy it), a 3D Saturn game with ultra-clean textures and insane light sourcing that the system can't do, and *Tunnel B1* (Sony bought it), a 3D driving/action/adventure with textures and lighting effects that boggle the mind. Conveniently, all three are tucked away in this issue. There seems to be a vast array of these small developers popping up with each new title screen.

So, while Sega, Nintendo, and now Sony will always be in the race, today's video game industry is open for companies like Matsushita to come in and achieve similar success. If you build it, they will come.

Of course, Sony has Square (that sounded odd) and SCE Japan, Sega still has Treasure and Sonic Team and Nintendo still has Miyamoto and Enix. So things haven't completely come apart... not yet, at least.



DEATH. It's what they live for.



Against a dark and shifting 3-D landscape, the warriors of the twisted underworld known as BATTLE ARENA TOSHINDEN 2™ await your return. How do they know you'll be back? Let's just say it's a gut feeling. As in the first 360° go-round, the moves are lethal, the stages visceral and the characters, wicked. And this time, the original avengers are joined by a new crew of fighters. Like Tracy, the sexy cop gone bad; Gaia, merciless madman; and Chaos, a friendly fella who happens to swing a sickle. All of 'em real keen to get to know you better. On every level.

So welcome back. And plan to stay awhile. Because here in Battle Arena Toshinden 2, these forsaken foes aren't just out to take you down. They're down to take you out.



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TOP TEN MOST WANTED

READERS' TOP TEN

1. Panzer Dragoon Zwei - Saturn
2. Resident Evil - PS
3. SF Alpha - PS
4. Virtua Fighter 2 - Saturn
5. Mario RPG - SNES
6. SF Alpha - Saturn
7. Chrono Trigger - SNES
8. Guardian Heroes - Saturn
9. Diddy's Kong Quest - SNES
10. Killer Instinct 2 - Arcade



READERS' MOST WANTED

1. Final Fantasy VII - PS
2. Mario⁶⁴ - Nintendo⁶⁴
3. Tekken 2 - PS
4. K⁶⁴ - Nintendo⁶⁴
5. SF Alpha 2 - PS/Saturn
6. Virtua Fighter 3 - Arcade
7. Ultimate MK3 - Saturn
8. Zelda⁶⁴ - Nintendo⁶⁴
9. Legend of Oasis - Saturn
10. Nights - Saturn



DEVELOPER'S TOP TEN

This Month's Guest:

TOM KETOLA

FROM PLAYER ONE

1. Robotron 3D - PS
2. Sentinel Worlds
3. Joust - Arcade
4. Sinistar - Arcade
5. R-Type - Arcade

6. Tempest - Arcade
7. Gradius - Arcade
8. Life Force - Arcade
9. Dune 2 - PC
10. King's Field - PS

GF EDITORS' TOP TEN

1. Crash Bandicoot - PS
2. Super Mario⁶⁴ - Nintendo⁶⁴
3. Pilotwings⁶⁴ - Nintendo⁶⁴
4. Tunnel B1 - PS
5. Legacy of Kain - PS



6. Pandemonium - PS
7. Panzer Zwei - PS
8. BUG TOO! - Saturn
9. Powerslave - Saturn
10. Tomb Raider - Saturn

1. Nights - Saturn
2. Crash Bandicoot - PS
3. Resident Evil - PS
4. Lunar 2 - Sega CD
5. Tobal No. 1 - PS



6. Tomb Raider - Saturn
7. Snatcher - Sega CD
8. Super Mario⁶⁴ - Nintendo⁶⁴
9. Dark Savior - Saturn
10. Pilotwings⁶⁴ - Nintendo⁶⁴

1. Super Mario⁶⁴ - Nintendo⁶⁴
2. Crash Bandicoot - PS
3. Pilotwings⁶⁴ - Nintendo⁶⁴
4. Motor Toon GP 2 - PS
5. Robotron 3D - PS



6. Wipeout 2 - PS
7. Nights - Saturn
8. Tomb Raider - PS
9. Shadows of the Empire⁶⁴ - Nintendo⁶⁴
10. Killer Instinct⁶⁴ - Nintendo⁶⁴

1. Nights - Saturn
2. Tomb Raider - Saturn
3. Crash Bandicoot - PS
4. Dark Savior - Saturn
5. Treasure Hunter G - SFC



6. Virtua Fighter Kids - Saturn
7. Legend of Oasis - Saturn
8. Tunnel B1 - PS
9. Panzer Dragoon Zwei - Saturn
10. Tekken 2 - PS

1. Nights - Saturn
2. Panzer Dragoon Zwei - Saturn
3. Tunnel B1 - PS
4. Crash Bandicoot - PS
5. Yoshi's Island - SNES



6. Tomb Raider - Saturn
7. Golden Axe - Genesis
8. Dracula X - PC Engine
9. Mario RPG - SNES
10. LandStalker - Genesis

1. Twilight Syndrome - PS
2. Tekken 2 - PS
3. Crash Bandicoot - PS
4. Nights - Saturn
5. Puzzle Bobble 2 - PS



6. Dezaemon Plus - PS
7. Street Fighter Alpha 2 - Arcade
8. Choro Q - PS
9. Resident Evil - PS
10. Shin Samurai Spirits - NeoGeo

WIN THE GAME SYSTEM OF YOUR CHOICE! ENTER TODAY!

All you have to do to enter the drawing is write down a list of your top 10 favorite games and the 10 games you want the most that aren't out yet, on a piece of paper or a postcard then send them to: GAMEFAN TOP TEN, 5137 Clareton Dr., Suite 210 Agoura Hills, CA 91301

First Prize:

Your choice of a 32X,
VIRTUAL BOY, or NOMAD.

Second Prize:

Your choice of one of the Picks
of the Month in Viewpoint.

Third Prize:

A FREE year of GameFan!
The best magazine in the universe!

Drawing is limited to One (1) entry per person per month. Drawings will be held on the 21st of each month. The three (3) winners will be notified by mail and listed on this page. For a complete list of rules and regulations write: GameFan Top Ten with self addressed & stamped envelope.

Congratulations

to last month's winners:

First Prize:

Jeff Van Kuren, Thompson, PA

Second Prize:

Michael Benavidez, Tucson, AZ

Third Prize:

Bequine Duverneau, Roosevelt, NY



Yup you guessed it! **GARGOS** is playable in KI2! At the character select screen, HOLD UP on the joystick, and tap in this order: FP, MP, MK, FK, MP, QP, QK, MK. If done correctly, you should hear a "SWOOSH" sound. To the right of MAYA Gargos' head appears.



Gargos' Move List

Fly: Hold UP and press FP.

Air Fireball: Half circle toward and FP. (MP and QP can also be used)

Shoulder Ram: Half circle backward and MK or FK.

Flame: Half circle toward and QP.

Uppercut: Forward, down, down-forward and FP.

Overhead attack: Half circle toward and FK (Air).

Throw: Forward and FP.

Life Gainer: Half circle backward and hold FP. (Doesn't work)



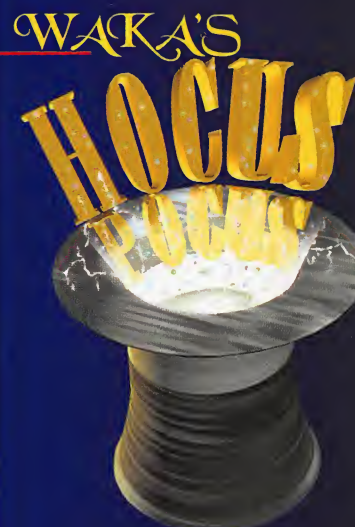
Simply press the buttons in this numbered sequence.



Justin Hazelle
Phoenix, Arizona



As of now, Gargos' ULTRAS, ULTIMATES, NO MERCY, ASSAULTS, or any SUPERS are unknown. His COMBO BREAKER however, is: Forward, down, down-forward and P/K. If you people out there know of any extra moves and such, write them in! Congratulations, Justin! And keep sending those tricks in!



Travel With Thy Controller In Hand To A Land Where Cheaters Prosper...



First Prize!
Win a Sega Nomad Game System!!

Second Prize!
Nintendo GameBoy system!!

Third Prize!
1 Year Sub. to GameFan!

Send in your codes... good, bad, or ugly. We'll look 'em over and choose one grand prize winner each month. Codes cannot come from a previously published US magazine. Winners will be drawn each month and displayed here in Hocus Pocus, the only place where cheaters prosper. (Current subscribers who win a sub. will receive a one-year extension.)

CONGRATULATIONS!

To this month's winners:
First Prize: Justin Hazelle

Phoenix, Arizona

Second Prize: Derek E. Jordan

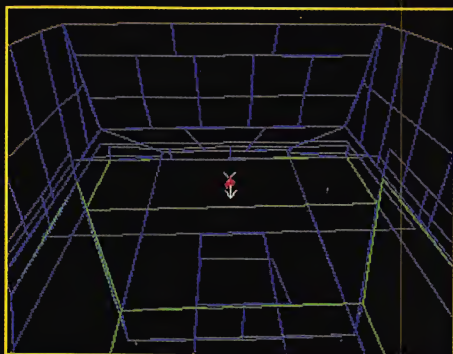
Columbus, Ohio

Third Prize: Sang Kwon

Torrance, California

SEND YOUR CARDS AND LETTERS TO:
Hocus Pocus

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FULL INVENTORY - Bring up the MAP screen. Then press LEFT until the arrow is pointing at you. Press START to return to the standard view. During the camera's auto-rotation, press L1, SQUARE, X, and CIRCLE at the same time. Press the TRIANGLE to verify that you have all of the weapons.

LEVEL SELECT - Go to the MAIN MENU (Game Load, New Game, etc). Press L1, L2, R1, R2, and UP at the same time. Now select NEW GAME. Press L1, L2, R1, R2, DOWN at the same time. Let go and set the difficulty level. A level select menu will come up. Use the D-pad and press X to select levels.

AMMO REFILL - Get in FOOT MODE. Do a backflip by pressing SQUARE and L1. During the backflip (before you land), press RIGHT, X, and CIRCLE at the same time. Now all of your weapons should have a weapon count.

HEALTH REFILL - Get in FOOT MODE. Do a backflip by pressing SQUARE and L2. During the backflip (before you land), press DOWN, X, R2, at the same time. Voila!

FART SOUND FOR THE BUTTS - Select LOAD GAME from the MAIN MENU. Press L1, L2, R1, R2, all at the same time, then let go. From now on all the butts will have a fart sound when they fire at you.

SEE FINAL SEQUENCE - Select LOAD GAME from MAIN MENU. Press RIGHT and hold it. While holding RIGHT button press CIRCLE. Press TRIANGLE to cancel. Press SQUARE and LEFT at the same time then let go. Press TRIANGLE to cancel. Now the game will show the final Kitchen scene.

CHEAT NAME

CHEAT CODE

CHEAT FEATURE

Farmer Joe	T-S-S-T-O-O-S-S-T-O-S-S
Mitzi	S-X-O-T-X-T-T-X-T-X-T-X
Scourge	T-S-O-X-T-S-X-T-S-X-O-S
Racer X	S-T-O-S-S-T-O-O-S-T-S-X
JAS	T-X-S-S-T-O-O-S-T-S-O-X
Buggin	S-T-O-S-O-X-S-X-O-T-S-X

Enter these during the game. (DO NOT PAUSE!)

All level access
All keys (to locked doors)
Mega Zowie Wowie
Invincibility (on/off)
+10 Lives, Mega Zowie Wowie, all level access
Turbo (on/off)

HERMIE HOPPERHEAD — PLAYSTATION (IMPORT) — DEBUG CODE

If you have Hermie or plan to buy him, don't use these evil codes until you've beaten the game!!!- E Storm.

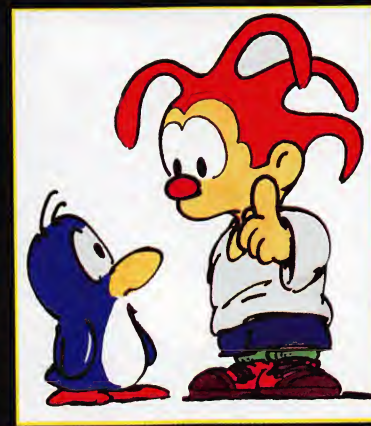


DEBUG CODE - At this TITLE SCREEN, simply hold down TRIANGLE, SQUARE, and X and start a NEW GAME. You've earned 100% completion, something that took E. Storm days and days (he hates this code by the way).

While playing the game, press and hold the SELECT button and hit START. Many (and I mean MANY), stars will fall. Use the stars to level-up your little egg buddies until they are full-grown, or stock up on your lives... Hold SELECT and press START one more time to clear the stage. Oh, I almost forgot to mention—if you hold down the SQUARE button while on the map screen, Hermie will run across the map.



I had to use the code several times because I'm just not as talented as Storm. (actually I've used it only once to show all of you... Ya right!). He said that I'd get a fat bonus check if I could.. er... Anyhow, enjoy a great old fashioned platformer..



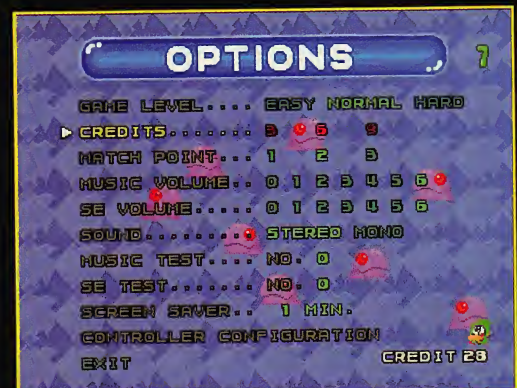
PUZZLE BOBBLE 2 — PLAYSTATION

EXTRA LEVEL, 30 CREDITS



At the TITLE SCREEN, on controller 1, enter: R1, UP, L2, & DOWN. If the code works, you will see one of the enemy characters from Bubble Bobble (the Wizard) dancing over your credits. Next choose a regular game (left side). An extra 27 levels will be playable!

Derek E. Jordan
Columbus, Ohio



In the OPTION menu, press: LEFT, RIGHT, R1, R2, L2, L1, UP, DOWN. Then quickly highlight CREDITS and press the "X" button as fast as you can. You can now increase your credits up to 29! Keep an eye on the timer in the upper right corner of the screen. Now you can play through the game with no problem!



When you flip to this section next issue you'll find the real thing. After three long years of wishing and waiting, the import N64 is but days away. June 23rd has already been declared a GF holiday. We'll take that day to begin what will hopefully be the gaming experience of a lifetime, *Super Mario and Pilotwings 64*. Of course, June 24th, we'll begin assembling the best N64 coverage you'll find anywhere.

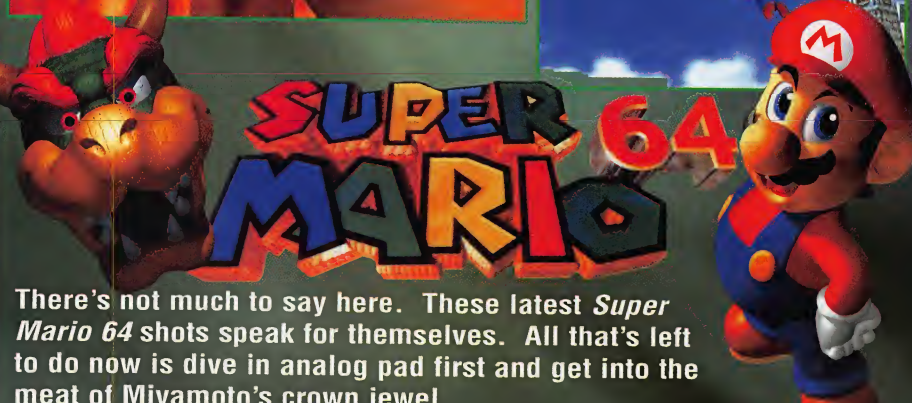
ROBOTECH



With a complex storyline, vast amounts of space to fly and fight in, and one of the most dynamic flight engines ever available in a home game, *Robotech* will undoubtedly take space combat to the next level. All of the models are properly articulated. When vehicles transform they do so mechanically, not by morphing, but by actually moving their parts around. Sounds good to me... really good! We'll have more on *Robotech* as it develops.



Reports from Nintendo peg *PW64* as a totally new and unique experience. We'll have an in-depth review in the September issue.



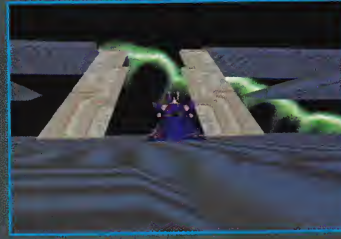
There's not much to say here. These latest *Super Mario 64* shots speak for themselves. All that's left to do now is dive in analog pad first and get into the meat of Miyamoto's crown jewel.



Assume the role of FREAK BOY, the lone survivor of a massive alien invasion. On New Year's Day, when the planets are aligned with the sun, the ZoS, an alien race from a parallel dimension, take over the Hedron Universe, extinguishing the sun and transporting all of the Hedrons to the alien dimension. The only Hedron to evade capture is FREAK BOY, who is destined to become the hero of his people, provided he can rid his universe of the alien threat and return the captive Hedrons to their rightful dimension. Three-dimensional graphics, addicting play mechanics and cutting-edge technology that uses morphing special effects define FREAK BOY's world. It's an alien world VIE says N64 players will never want to leave. Created using SGI workstations, FREAK BOY utilizes the N64's advanced 3-D technology allowing all aspects of the game to be experienced in 3-D. Not only are the characters presented in realistic full 3-D, but their worlds and interactions with other beings are amazingly multi-dimensional. The 3-D power of the N64 also gives players the ability to experience gameplay from thousands of different points-of-view. The result is a unique visual experience that VIE says intensifies the gameplay to such a degree that even the most experienced game player will be challenged. Created by Burst, VIE's in-house development team, FREAK BOY is scheduled to be in stores in early 1997.

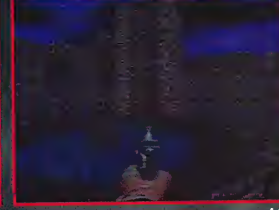
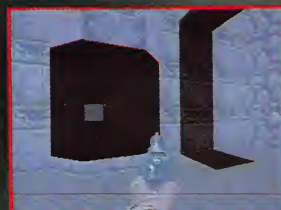


The first N64 sports game, Wayne Gretzky 3D Hockey is on schedule for a simul release this September. Unparalleled sports realism is at hand.



DOOM 64

These shots, extracted painfully from video, are meant to give you an idea of how clean the textures in *Doom 64* are. Unfortunately, video grabs don't quite do the trick, so you'll just have to take my word for it. They are super excellent. The elliptical lighting effects are what get me though, wow! This will be the *Doom* to beat all *Doom's* (and that's a lot of *Dooms*!). No enemies were present on the video but I'm hopeful they'll be equally impressive.



VIEWPOINT

Legend
Graphics
Control
Play mechanics
Music
Originality



SKID



E. STORM



NICK ROX



EVIL LIGHTS



ORION



MR. GOO



TAKUHI



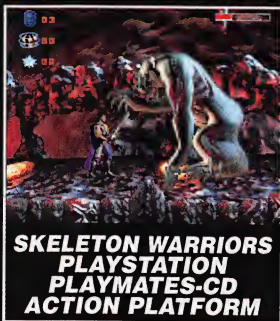
CAP'N SNAPPY



WrestleMania



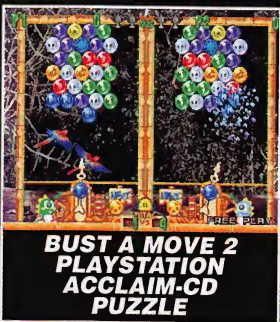
GAME OF THE MONTH!



SKELETON WARRIORS
 PLAYSTATION
 PLAYMATES-CD
 ACTION PLATFORM

Skeleton Warriors belongs on the Saturn. It was made for the Saturn and then squeezed on to the PS in mere months. While *SW* is a solid side scroller for a system without many (without any actually), it's noticeably better on the SS. Of course the music still rocks and it is all alone in PS 2D land. I recommend it to all who crave the dying breed of 2D.

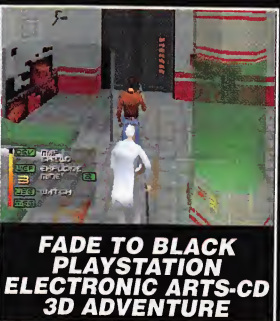
G C P M O 80



BUST-A-MOVE 2
 PLAYSTATION
 ACCLAIM-CD
 PUZZLE

Wow! The puzzle game that took the arcades by storm is back! And... and... it's almost exactly the same as the original. Of course, that's not exactly bad. This game is just as fun and addicting as it was last year, but I was hoping for more from a "sequel."

G C P M O 90



FADE TO BLACK
 PLAYSTATION
 ELECTRONIC ARTS-CD
 3D ADVENTURE

Take all of the fantastic gameplay found in *Flashback*, add smooth 3D and decent polygonal graphics and you've got a game worth staying home for. More for its gameplay than its overall look and feel, I recommend *FTB* to those who enjoy an involved adventure. A shooting fest this ain't. *FTB's* about trial and error, much like its predecessors. Definitely worthy of your attention.

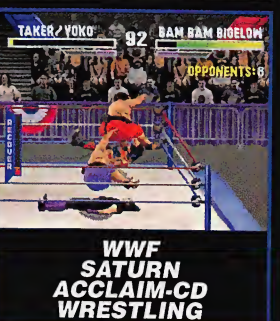
G C P M O 80



BOGEY DEAD 6
 PLAYSTATION
 SONY OF AMERICA-CD
 FLIGHT SIM

BD6 is a middle-of-the-road (or air) flight sim on the PlayStation. It's no *Stealth*, but then again, it's no *MIG-29* purchased from some shady black-market connection either. The great thing about *BD6* is that it keeps things simple... if you like your flight sims that way. *BD6* is also for you if you like your flight-sims slow. Everything's whizzing by fast enough up in the sky, but no matter how low you go, the ground just crawls by. An average effort.

G C P M O 75



WWF SATURN
 ACCLAIM-CD
 WRESTLING

"Pin him, pin him, pin him!" the crowd screams as I pummel Bam-Bam Bigelow to the mat. "I am the Undertaker and I will lay to rest any and all who cross my path!" Whoa, sorry, got a little carried away there. The crowd's a bit motionless and the sound effects a tad low compared to the perfect PS version but still. *WWFW* packs a mighty punch. I was hoping for Saturn perfection but like all Acclaim ports the PS game is the better of the two. Saturn owners still get a decent version.

G C P M O 88

It's sad that the Saturn game (that we had a final version of six months ago) just came out. That game was and is great... *SW* PS is pretty cool, but it's just missing that special something the Saturn game has. Still, the music is movie quality and the gameplay, diverse. Think about it this way: At least they made a PS version. Sony obviously hates the category but saw something here worth having. That alone says a lot.

G C P M O 85

You know it, you love it... it's *Bust-A-Move*. This is basically the same game. It's got a few new modes of play, but the obvious differences are the graphics and new music—which is actually pretty great, and took me by surprise in quite a few instances. But if you want to know what the high-point of *Bust-A-Move 2* was for me? Hearing "Yatta!" in just about the cutest way imaginable. Otherwise, you know... it's part one.

G C P M O 79

You know, I actually liked *Flashback* a lot, but this game just doesn't really appeal to me. You run around, you shoot stuff in bland shooting sequences, you solve puzzles, and you enjoy bland graphics. I guess this game was innovative and visually amazing on PCs a year and a half ago, but the PlayStation has a number of original games that blow it away. It's just hard to get excited about this one.

G C P M O 70

I didn't like *Sidewinder* six months ago, and I really don't like it now. The graphics are nice and the missions are interesting enough, but the unshakable feeling you're travelling no faster than your neighborhood school bus grates hard. There's no point to *Bogey* when games like *Ace Combat* and *Warhawk* are available.

G C P M O 65

A shooting-star suplex!... Oh no, not a kasa-hajime!... And what's that? An asaimonsault! Good God, a bust of Abe Lincoln has just been shattered over his head! Oh, wait... I was dreaming of a video game for ECW Wrestling. Now that's hardcore. Although I'm repelled by anything WWF, the Saturn version is a near perfect port of the arcade game, which actually has gameplay to it. Rather than whittling your fingers by hitting buttons at lightspeed, you go through the motions SF-style. The best wrestling game I've played since the bygone days of NES *Pro Wrestling*.

G C P M O 86

Having stayed completely dry of anything 2D for my PlayStation, I'm quite happy with *Skeleton Warriors*. Great graphics (except for the flying stages), zooming gameplay and smooth animation, coupled with throbbing tunes is something I've sorely missed of late. My biggest gripe? Prince Lightstar slides downhill standing up, and one of his idles is a slide... figure that one out.

G C P M O 88

I really loved this game... When it was called *Bust-A-Move ONE*. Of course, there are a few new twists, the graphics are a bit nicer, and there is a pretty cool soundtrack, so I guess it's not a total wash. Bottom line, if you already have *Bust-A-Move*, you already have *Bust-A-Move 2*. But if you don't, well, you're missing out on a very cool puzzle game.

G C P M O 88

Fade to Black is a solid 3D action/adventure game. It doesn't quite have the power of *Resident Evil*, and the play mechanics need a bit of tweaking, but overall it's a fun ride. I'm going to kinda miss the "old" 2D look of the series, but Delphine's first 3D game is impressive enough to have me looking forward to their next release.

G C P M O 80

Sidewinder has finally hit our shores with an interesting name change. When this depressingly slow flight simulator was released in Japan about 6 months ago, it had some amazing visuals to combat the poor play engine. The problem is, the graphics aren't as impressive as they were when first reviewed it, so it's lost most of its appeal. Those who enjoy arcade flight simulators might want to give it a try, others might want to look for more realistic air combat.

G C P M O 70

Since my father was a professional wrestler, I'm always sure to take a hard look at every wrestling title that comes out. And this is the one I think is the best. *WWFW* is just like the real thing—user-friendly controls are a big part of *WWFW's* attraction. The gameplay's fast and fun with crazy stuff shootin' everywhere all the time. I've put so many quarters into the arcade game that some days I have no money to buy food. Now that *WWFW's* out on the Saturn though, I can play it at home! "Let's get ready to rumble!"

G C P M O 93

I really loved this game... When it was called *3DO Road Rash*. Okay, the PlayStation conversion was just SAD, but now this version of *Road Rash* is celebrating its two year anniversary... And in the chronology of 32-bit games, that's about 70 generations worth. I pity Electronic Arts' poor programmers, having to spend the peak of their youth making the same game over and over and over again. You're supposed to make games, not emulators. Can't we all just move on with our lives?



G C P M O 59
5 6 7 4 0

PC ports weren't bad enough, now here come the 3DO ports. You'd think the jump from 3DO to Saturn would result in huge improvements but sadly this is not the case with *Road Rash*. Flat color, pop-up, and flat out bad animation is what you get here. New tunes could have helped this broke-dig-dog along but the old grunge is along for the ride once again. *RR* Saturn's best attribute? The distorted dudes hangin' out in the toilet.



G C P M O 50
6 6 5 4 4

Wow! In the tradition of *Namco Museum* and *Williams Arcade's Greatest Hits*, the Saturn gets its own disc full of nostalgia... the 3DO version of *Road Rash*. Maybe if I looked at the game from this viewpoint (no pun intended) I would give it a slightly higher score. Let me try it out: hmm... nope, it's not happening. *Road Rash* Saturn is no next-gen "classic reissue"; it's just a damn shame. Sure it plays like the old *Road Rash*, but as a port to a system with much higher standards, I don't know how something like this can be taken seriously.



G C P M O 55
4 9 6 3 4



ROAD RASH SATURN
ELECTRONIC ARTS-CD
RACING/COMBAT

I really loved this game... When it was called... When it was ca... er... Okay, that's not going to work this time. Actually, I really do love this game. SQUARE's been disappointing me lately but this is a lovely example of the type of quality game design that made SQUARE so famous in the first place. The music is outstanding, the battle system is brilliant, and the quest is charming. SQUARE's final Super Famicom game... I... I... I promised myself I wouldn't cry... but... (sniff) I just can't help it... Oh SQUARE... (sob) I... I LOVE YOU! (waaaaahhhhh!)



G C P M O 94
8 7 8 9 8

Well, the last Super Famicom Square game has finally been released. The thing is, I'm not sure how I feel about it. It's kinda bittersweet, we've finally moved into 32-bit, but I'll miss those Super Famicom RPGs... Anyway, I couldn't think of a better way for Square to leave 16-bit than *Treasure Hunter G*. This game is the perfect blend of strategy and role playing, it almost feels like *Chrono Trigger*. The music's great, and the SG graphics fit right in. It's a game no Square fan should be without.



G C P M O 92
9 8 9 8 8

Square's final Super Famicom game... the end of an era. Luckily, the send-off title wasn't a slice of pap like *Rudra no Hihou*, *Bahamut Lagoon* or *Gun Hazard*—rather, an immensely enjoyable lil' RPG. I'm not too fond of the rendered characters, though. What's the point of using CG if there aren't enough animation frames in the game to exploit the technology? Ah well. This is the last Square RPG until December, too... I'll have to make it last!



G C P M O 89
8 8 8 9 7



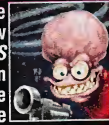
TREASURE HUNTER G
SUPER FAMICOM
SQUARE-32MB CART
RPG

Ouch! This has got to be the single worst translation I've ever seen. This once-mighty 3DO RPG (in fact it's one of my favorite 3DO games) gets three things from the Saturn: slow down, slow down, and still more slow down. *S&S* moves at little more than 5fps much of the time making it quite unbearable. If you have a 3DO, pick up *Lucienne's Quest* (the US title of the 3DO version) but import Saturn gamers, stay far far way. Our version's a turd burglar.



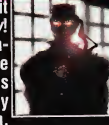
G C P M O 60
4 5 5 6 7

Hah! I never thought I'd see the day a 3DO game would blow away a Saturn version. *S&S* was an outstanding game on the 3DO, but the graphics were a tad choppy. Hey, if the Saturn's a more powerful machine, why haven't the visuals been improved? And what's with that cheap re-make of the overworld map? I don't know, the game has new voice acting, but who cares? Thanks, but I'll just stick with my 3DO version for now.



G C P M O 60
4 6 7 9 2

I really loved this game... When it was called *3DO Sword & Sorcery*! (Damn, I love that line!) Poor conversions are always an unfortunate thing, but this one *really* hurt. I was looking forward to this! I actually stopped playing the 3DO version, 'cause why should I put up with that unsightly pop-up when "a perfect Saturn version is right around the corner?" What a screw! Is there some public domain 3DO emulator for the Saturn that everyone's using now? Cliche closing line: "At least it still has a great soundtrack." Hmmp.



G C P M O 72
6 5 6 9 4



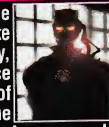
SWORD & SORCERY
SATURN
SEGA-CD
RPG

I really loved this game in the arcade and on the Mega Drive but now can only like it. *Darius Gaiden* smashes it in every way. Still, those old Zuntata tunes take me back to those *Streets of Rage/Sonic* days and the zooming, with almost no pixelization, is a cool goody. But age has tarnished the presentation of *Darius II* quite a bit. Unlike 501s, games do not get better with age.



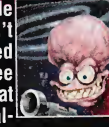
G C P M O 70
7 8 6 8 6

This one's really only for the true *Darius*-ophile, but if you take your shooting games seriously, you'll appreciate the intense shooting action and high level of challenge this one presents. The option to scale up on the action is *very* cool, and the graphics and music are still sorta charming in a 1989 sort of way (whatever that means). If you're tired of *Darius Gaiden*, why not head to *Darius II* for a much-needed helping of a thing called tuna sashimi?



G C P M O 80
6 8 8 6 6

Wow... an eight-year-old arcade game. Guess what... I don't care! Though I've always loved the *Darius* series, I don't see much point to *Darius II* now that *Gaiden* is out. Sure, it's challenging, and it has an innovative scale-in-and-out system... great. Just don't charge \$60 for it! Still, in what other game can you hear your on-board computer whine about never having tried "a thing called tuna sashimi?"



G C P M O 60
5 7 7 5 3



DARIUS II
SATURN
TAITO-CD
SHOOTER

My lil' bendy buddies are back and in stunning form. *MTGP2* is full of improvements from the cool hidden characters to the hordes of bonus tracks. The effects in this one border on scary, with wild neon transparent tubes and lighting effects from above. Best of all *MTGP2* is more challenging than the original and therefore very re-playable, something *MTGP* was not. I just hope I'm back here again for an American review. If I can't have *Hermie* at least give me *MTGP2*.



G C P M O 85
9 8 7 6 8

This is driving excitement! There are so many hidden things packed throughout the game, that for once you get to go beyond beating lap-times over and over again. *MTGP2*'s got some of the most insane courses you've ever seen in a racing game. The Haunted Castle: check out the dragons in this stage! It's some pretty unusual scenery, but I'll take a giant Puff-type thing staring at me rather than billboards that show some sour-faced kid telling me how much he hates the Arch-Deluxe, thank you.



G C P M O 92
9 7 7 6 7

The best racing game available for the home. That's all there is to it. Ten tracks, seven vehicles, and enough lovin' options to choke a sea cucumber equal pure driving excitement. Add that to Sony's gracious decision to pack the game in with a disc for use in link-up play (you don't have to buy two copies of the game) and you have an absolute must-buy.



G C P M O 90
9 8 7 8 7



MOTOR TOON 2
PLAYSTATION
SCE-CD
RACING/COMBAT



P
PREVIEW

LAYOUT - E. STORM



DEVELOPER - NAUGHTY DOG

PUBLISHER - SONY

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS-1 VERY HAPPY

DIFFICULTY-INTERMEDIATE +

AVAILABLE - SEPT. 9



LOOK! IT'S PS2!

NAUGHTY DOG

N. SANITY BEACH

CRASH BANDICOOT

I haven't had a minute's rest since *Crash* came crashing in to my office. In fact, I find it difficult to look away from *Crash Bandicoot*. It's the best action/platform game I've ever seen or played by so far that it scares me. 640 megs of pure game lies ahead, no FMV, no redbook audio. Just great PCM and the most insane textures you have ever seen anywhere in a game that looks and feels like nothing before it. You know what's even scarier? ND says their next game will be *better*. Uh-huh. Think about this: *Super Mario 64* and *Crash* hit the same month. Sensory overload may result.





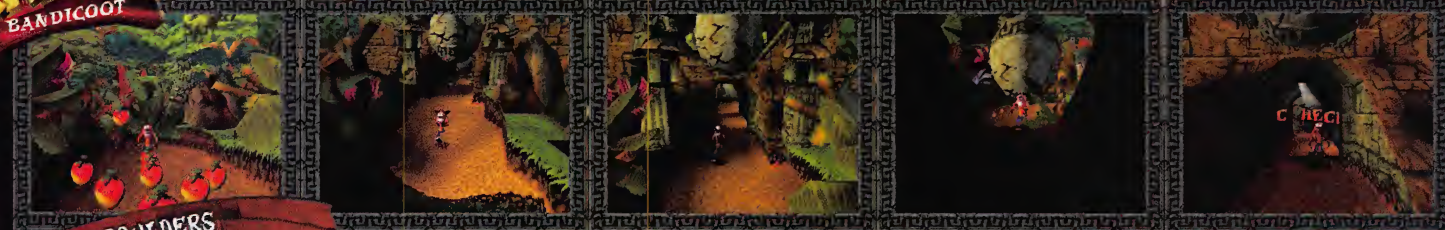
Crash washes up on *N. Sanity Beach*. I can't describe how cool he feels or how amazed you are the first time you see the game in action. Since every man, woman and child will play *Crash* I guess I don't have to worry about that. From there you're off to *Jungle Rollers* where huge Incan wheels roll in your path. This will break you. You will say "I am broken" and perhaps quit your job.



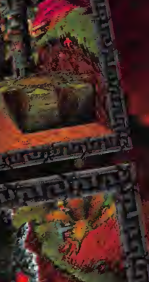
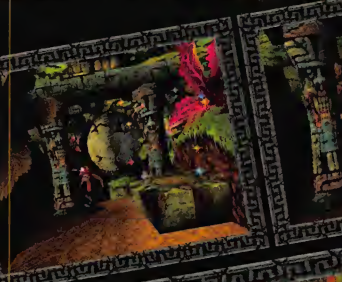
The first side scrolling level, *The Great Gate*, is so beaming with color it may take you a moment to realize how cool the level is. It goes waaaay up. This 2D is in 3D. Crash is free to move to and fro.



BOULDERS



Boulders. **BOULDERS!?!...**
RUN! Even nick an obstacle and you're a pancake-dicoot. This is too much fun. I die on purpose to do it again all the time. The PCM is especially cool here. Break every box!



UPSTREAM



Besides the fact that there is real water inside my TV, I'm just fine, really. When you get to the waterfall prepare to be amazed. In *Upstream*, you can see the fish under the water, lily pads push softly under foot and you just die. This can't be happening on my PlayStation. It just can't. Do fall in and check the splash.

PAPU PAPU



Big, fat, and easy to kill. *Papu Papu*'s really just a warm up boss. You'll want to learn his pattern so you can hang out and watch his rolls jiggle. *Papu Papu* also sports a butt-crack that would make any plumber proud. For maximum viewage there's a safe spot on his throne.

ROLLING STONES

Question is, are those wheels as old as the band? *Rolling Stones* is much harder than *Jungle Rollers*. Good timing is an absolute must.

HOG WILD

WEE-HA! I'm gonna ride me some hog! The music here, along with Crash's smirk and the snortin' hog is just the coolest thing ever. Cool yes, but easy? Not very. Bounce off bongos, avoid squirrely natives and watch for spikes!

NATIVE FORTRESS

Higher and harder than than
The Great Gate, the Native Fortress is twice the fun with the pink gem. Pick it up!

Pictured above, Crash completes the Native Fortress... Yeah! Woo-hoo! But did he break every box? Explode all the TNT?

THIS CONCLUDES OUR TOUR OF ISLAND NUMBER ONE. PLEASE BOARD THE COURTESY TRAM KEEPING YOUR ARMS AND LEGS INSIDE THE VEHICLE.

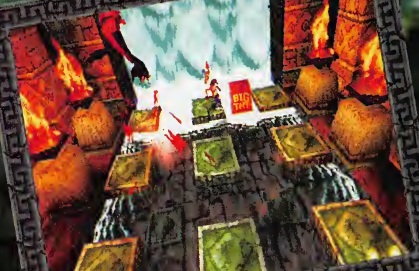


RIPPER ROO

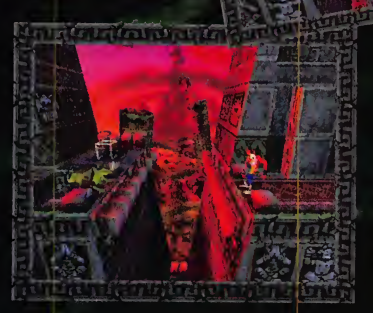
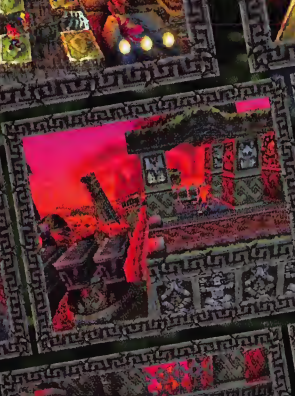
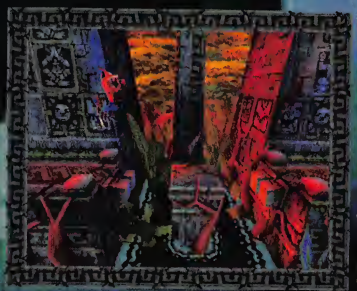


He's just plain crazy. So blow him up! Easier said than done. (Temporary hole open, far left pane)

THE LOST CITY



Besides the fact that these colors don't exist and the parallax isn't just flat pictures but thick, lush polygons, I'm just fine, really. *The Lost City* goes way right, way, way, up, way left and then way up again. After this level you'll wonder how it could get any better. But it does get better. The third island which is nearly 50% of the game... I can't even show. When you see those levels... you'll want a Naughty Dog t-shirt.



TEMPLE RUINS



The Temple Ruins: Simply hard to believe.

BOULDER DASH



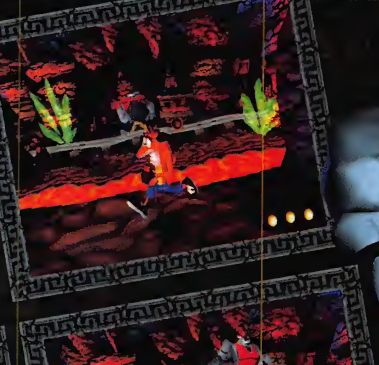
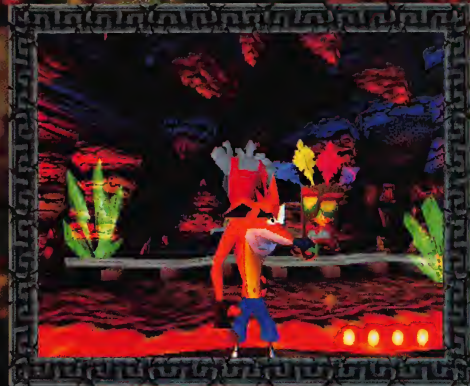
Boulder Dash ... It's Boulders on straight Kool-aid, I mean with sugar, straight powder. As you can see, I had the proper gem. The room below must be seen to be not believed. Now that's good grammar!

SUNSET VISTA



JAWS OF DARKNESS

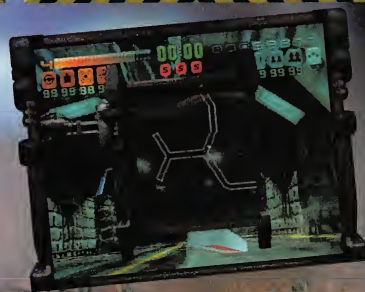




THE SECRET OF THE GEMS...

BONUS LEVELS!!

SAVE POINT IN COMPLETED



TUNNEL B1

It's a Doom clone! It's a driving game! Yes, I'll be the first to admit that these aren't exactly genres that are under-represented in the PlayStation's soft line-up. But no matter how much it borrows from *Doom* and *Wipeout*, there's always room in my library for a game as spectacular looking as *Tunnel B1*.

Tunnel B1 is the product of some company I've never even heard of before, by the name of Neon. They may be obscure (more military contractors, perhaps?), but they have the PlayStation wired. I've never seen better 3D than this... There's no pop-up, the game moves really fast, and the lighting effects are sensational. I just can't believe this game's mood... Everything's dark but detailed, and scales and animated beautifully.

The light-sourcing on the weapons is amazing, and some of the details... I'm horribly sick of lens flares (that has got to be the most overused new concept), but these lens flares occur at just the right place, and move right

along with you, creating an unparalleled degree of realism. The music is incredible, very cinematic. I wouldn't be surprised if it was done by the guy who did the *Alien Trilogy* soundtrack.

Play mechanics wise, *Tunnel B1* really is the half-breed love-child of *Doom* and *Wipeout*. You zip through tunnels and labyrinths, picking up weapons and solving relatively simple puzzles to open doors while constantly being on the lookout for stationary cannons, mortars, tanks, and helicopters. My only complaint here would be that there's no way to strafe or dodge quickly, often leaving you in the situation where you and an enemy are just standing there shooting at each other. If they could fix that while keeping the same level of quality in level design, graphics and music, well, I'd be a happy little boy indeed. -Takuhi



PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - OCEAN UK

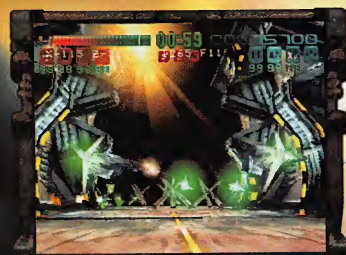
PUBLISHER - SCEA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - SEPTEMBER



LOOK AT THE INCREDIBLE LIGHTING EFFECTS GOING ON IN THESE SHOTS!



TAKUHI
I'M A HAPPY LITTLE BOY...

P PREVIEW

LAYOUT - E. STORM



DEVELOPER - STUDIO E

PUBLISHER - PLAYMATES

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - N/A

DIFFICULTY - N/A

AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER



0:12.26

SCOTT



50 MPH

Place Lap
1 1/5



0:46.80
0:30.20

Leader
-0:02.78



0 MPH

Place Lap
5 2/5



When it comes to motocross games, well, it never really does come to motocross games because there just aren't that many. When one does come along however, I anticipate it feverishly and pray whoever's doing it gets it right. Though *Super MX 32X* and *Dirt Trax FX* were both fun games to play, neither came close to the real thing.

Most often over looked is style. Motocross is a sport big on bright colors, noise pollution (two-stroke engines scream with pain), and crazy high speed maneuvers. Without these things an MX game just isn't right. So far, only one has even come close to getting it right, and that's the still ultra-expensive *Stadium Cross* arcade game, by Sega.

Having raced for seven years, seven unforgettable years, the mere sight of that machine excites me.

A comparable game surfacing on one of the new platforms seemed unlikely, so I recently made arrangements to buy *Stadium Cross* from a local dealer (a coin-op dealer). Playmates and Studio E just saved me a ton of money. *VMX Racing* is still really early, and





already I can tell it's going to be just about perfect. The animation is 100% dead on, the tracks and the way they feel, totally authentic, and the feel (though the control still needs a lot of tweaking) seems like it will be perfect.

The camera angles are one of the most notable early features. Instead of locking in one of two or three, you can zoom freely to your comfort level (which will vary from track to track) and lock it in. While paused the camera rotates and you can lose the on screen info bars, allow-

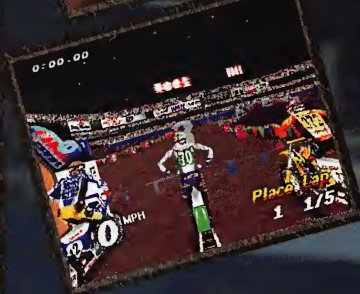
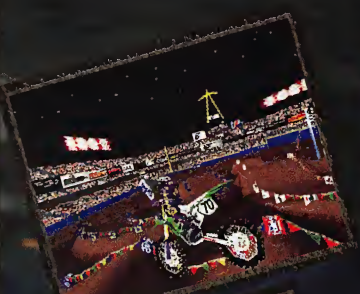
NEW ORLEANS SUPERCROSS

SAN JOSE NATIONAL



ANAHEIM SUPERCROSS

ing you to clearly view the competition behind you or a particularly lofty jump. While airborne holding the right or left shift produces one footers, one handers, table-tops, etc. Neat, huh? The frame rate is doing really well, and looks to be in the 30fps neighborhood, this with gobs of stuff on screen. Three of seven tracks lay before you and keep in mind any clipping or break-up you see will no doubt be corrected. VMXR debuts in September. I'll have a review in the corresponding issue. If only they could program in that smell...





BURNING ROAD

P
PREVIEW

LAYOUT - E. STORM



DEVELOPER - TOKA

PUBLISHER - PIE

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1/LINK

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - JULY



DEFINITELY
BURNING

Burning Road is among the very best of the many new PS racers due out this summer and fall. Known by many as *Dayclona*, the nickname it picked up at the E3, *Burning Road* is, in my opinion, a better game than *Daytona*. By taking the best *Daytona* had to offer, namely its look and feel, and adding realistic lighting effects, crazy weather (the rain and snow is frighteningly real) and a more varied assortment of vehicles, Toka's taken the *Daytona* theme to the extreme with blazing results. Perhaps the coolest thing Toka has done is mimic *Daytona*'s fantastic B-Univ tunes... in their own unique way. The music in *BR* is worthy of a soundtrack. The game set-up is identical to



Daytona's with three tracks available at the outset and more appearing as you pick up wins. The four cameras are identical as well. In fact, if not for having way less clipping and pop-up than Saturn *Daytona*, you'd swear this was the same engine. Of course, that's a good thing. There's lots more to say about *Burning Road*, so I'll pick it up next month with a burning review.





Here's the low-down on Black Dawn: you're a member of the Black-Operations unit, a highly-trained team deployed by the United States in an effort to wipe out the forces of twisted minds who make the world a more dangerous place everyday for our children... or the children we've yet to have... or maybe the children we'll someday adopt. You pilot an Apache-style helicopter and go deep into the heart of enemy territory to take out assorted targets, or to save the hostages who run about in confusion.

The control in BD is pretty tight. If you've played Black Ops' previous game, Agile Warrior on the PlayStation, or the Comanche games on the PC, then you should feel right at home; if not, it won't take long before you're navigating around the mission space like a chopper veteran. But don't think things can't get intense during these missions.

You select an operation from the numerous insertion points scattered across the globe. Once there, you've got a job to complete and a battalion of enemies to kill in the process. As you end the lives of your foes, you can obtain power-ups such as fuel and rockets. There are also a lot of features on the terrain that you can use to your advantage in the midst of the firefight (moving your chopper out over the water to get away from enemy tanks, encircling the hills to get the edge on other aircraft); if you need to figure out just where you stand (er, hover), just check your area map. Or cycle around through the camera angles until you find one that fits: you can even play the game in 3rd-person Warhawk-style mode.

There will be 28 missions in the game when Virgin launches Black Dawn this fall. Watch out—BD may emerge as the best PS flight-sim yet. It's so much better than Agile Warrior that if Black Ops keeps refining their skills in this genre, every title they release may be something to really look forward to...

BLACK DAWN



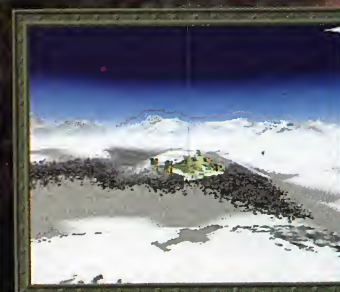
P
PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - BLACK OPS
PUBLISHER - VIRGIN INTER.
FORMAT - CD
OF PLAYERS - 1
DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
AVAILABLE - OCTOBER



EVIL LIGHTS



P
PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - CORE

PUBLISHER - EIDOS

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

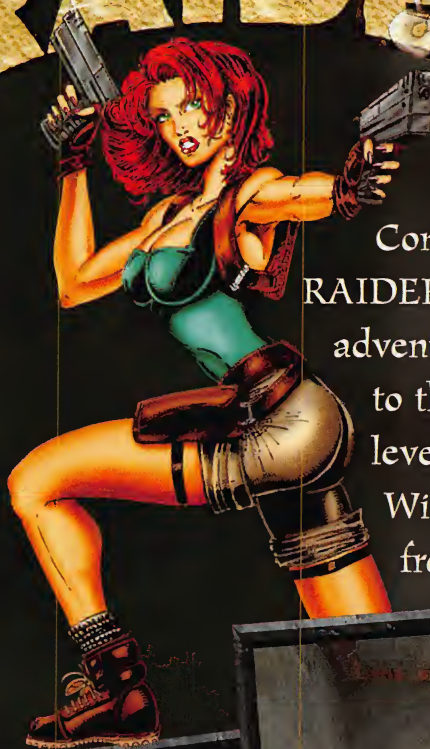
DIFFICULTY - N/A

AVAILABLE - OCTOBER



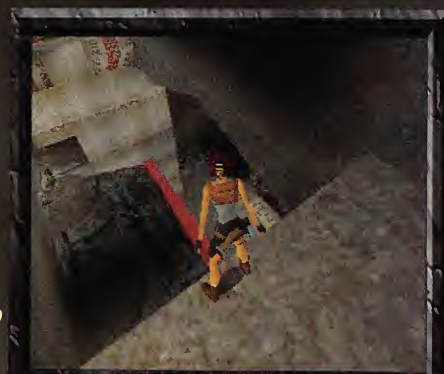
EVIL LIGHTS
TR'S COMING ALONG
SWIMMINGLY!

TOMB RAIDER



Core's TOMB
RAIDER takes 3D
adventure gaming
to the next
level...

With a little help
from Lara Cruz



Last month, E. Storm brought you a sneak peek of the Saturn version of Core's latest, *Tomb Raider*. This month we're taking a look at the PlayStation version, and as you can see, development is running super-smoothly on both titles. Both seem to be pretty similar at this point too, and while we're looking at only about 30% finished versions, neither has any aspect that's greatly inferior to the other.

In case you missed last month, I'll go over *TR*'s premise again (in case, you know, you couldn't infer it from the shots). You're a treasure-hunting wonder named Lara Cruz set to exploring a series of cavernous ruins. The beauty of *Tomb Raider* (besides Lara, of course), is the game's incredible 3D polygon world. It makes for some amazing scenes, but the most obvious benefit of the painstaking care Core put into *TR* is in the main character. Lara is an amazingly modeled and animated creation: every motion she makes is perfection. Running, strafing with her guns, swimming, flipping through the air, slowly taking steps backwards—it's truly something to see. Actually, it's pretty





incredible how anyone could be so flexible. Of course, Lara's dexterity is probably made possible by her choice in wardrobe: a form-fitting sleeveless shirt and a pair of shorts so short—well, let's just say the holsters on her pistols go farther down her thigh than the cuffs of her shorts. And, like E. Storm pointed out before, she's got an array of tools in her mini-pack to make her stay in the dank caverns a little more comfortable, including a sort of Play-It-Loud style GameBoy. But, *urgh*, it looks like *Pong* is eternally burned onto the screen... although she's a gamer, her tastes leave a lot to be desired. (But what I wouldn't give to read that diary...)

The control is top-notch. Pressing Square lets you leap insane distances, and holding down left or right in mid-jump makes Lara spin off to the side. Triangle makes you draw your guns, while X fires them. Shooting your pair of pistols and actually hitting a target is surprisingly accurate for a completely 3D game. If a group of bloodthirsty wolves sniff you down and you get into some trouble, you can run from them and just keep blasting away: your bullets automatically seek out the tick-ridden mongrels and end their life quick-like. This even goes for the occasional bat who comes flying down towards Lara's hair; normally, firing at such an erratic-moving beastie and actually hitting it would be a living hell, but in *TR* it's as easy as draw and shoot. X is also used to swim underwater and to pull yourself up onto any ledges a la *Prince of Persia* (I know, the comparison's already been made a hundred times, but...). Finally, you can inch forward while holding down R1 and pressing the D-pad, and you can move the camera angle around while holding L1 and using the D-pad again.

Switching the camera angle really gives you a grip on the situation, especially if you're high up on a ledge and feel the need to look straight down to the depths below. This is vertigo-inducing, but it certainly shows off the game's lack of pop-up. As impressive as that may be, the biggest thrill in the scenery that we've seen so far in *TR* are the incredible effects to be found in the water. Dive in—when you look up at the surface, everything is rippling majestically (and if the camera-angle is at a bird's-eye view from the room's ceiling, looking down towards Lara through the pool, she seems to be dancing some insane jig!). Also, when swimming throughout the underwater tunnels, you come across some of the most beautiful light-sourcing effects I have ever seen. Shadows bend and shimmer and rotate, varying in opacity... as far as I'm concerned, this is *real water*.

I can't wait to see the final version of *Tomb Raider*. Core has got a winner on their hands with this one: it's sure to be one of the best titles of the year for both the PlayStation and the Saturn when it's released. One thing on my wish list for the finished version is an auto-mapping feature—*TR*'s catacombs, when completed, will easily compete in size with some of the bulkiest 3D games. Besides, I'm a complete idiot who has no sense of direction; dullards like myself need such guidance to avoid running around in the same sequence of rooms for 20 minutes before realizing things look a little familiar. (I would have been screwed in the second dungeon of *Zelda 1* if it weren't for that map.) But auto-map or not, *TR* is going to kick some serious butt when it's finished, and we'll be the first ones to let you know how sore the bruises are... Stay tuned.

-Evil Lights





DISRUPTOR



P
PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - INSOMNIAC
PUBLISHER - UNIVERSAL I.S.
FORMAT - CD
OF PLAYERS - 1
DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
AVAILABLE - OCTOBER



EVIL LIGHTS
USE YER HEAD!

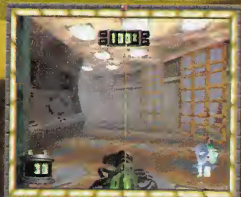


MISSION
TWO

The latest foray into the long line of PlayStation corridor games is Insomniac's *Disruptor*. You play the part of a LightStormer trooper, a member of the squad deployed to wipe out the enemy forces of your boss, the New Solar Government. It would usually seem appropriate to tack onto that sentence the phrase: "...using the only means you know—turning the opponent into blood sausage with an array of weapons that would make you the envy of any militia-member." Granted, you do get a large selection of firearms with which to terminate any of the enemies populating each of the 13 levels of the game; but you're also given an option that isn't normally a key factor in conquering 3D shoot-em-ups—using your head. That is, your character has been provided with a series of mental enhancements allowing him to use a variety of psionic powers, the metaphoric "green beret" designation of the

LightStormer unit. These come in handy not only to vaporize an entire battalion of enemy troopers, but also to keep yourself from being transformed into some carbon-shadow form of graffiti decorating the side of a stairwell.

So far, the level design is looking pretty nice: there's lots of light-source shading that throws a particularly eerie glow over certain sections you'll come across while scouring locations both inside of enemy fortresses and on the surface of alien planets. The first three stages are only training missions, but you still need to show some mettle there to prove you're up to the task of wiping out the enemy troops and robots dispersed through the later levels. In fact, the psychic theme of the game carries over into exactly what it is you're fighting some-



MISSION
TWO





times: expect to go one-on-one with foes that exist only in your character's mind. Scary...

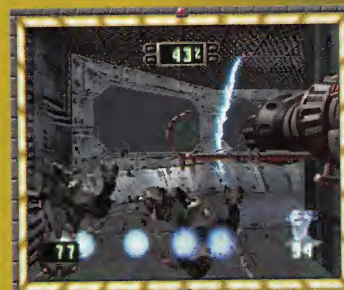
Since Universal Interactive Studios is releasing the game, the finished version will have live-action sequences produced by the MCA Corporation's own Television Entertainment group. With this Hollywood connection comes a number of individuals who have done their time on both the silver and the small screen. For instance, the game environments were devised by Catherine Hardwicke, a movie production designer, and the music is composed by David Bergeaud, who worked on a number of *Earth 2* episodes. UIS even hopes to outdo the kind of lavish touches being put on such highly-publicized projects as *Wing Commander IV*. So be prepared for high-quality cut-scenes that definitely do *not* look like some hastily-prepared segment for a public-access broadcast; not to mention a soundtrack crafted to match the scenario in which it plays, changing in real-time depending on your current surroundings and how intense the action is becoming.

Although the number of new corridor games with true quality and non-recycled themes is wearing thin, *Disruptor*, as you may have noticed, has got more than a few aspects which give me hope that the genre still has enough unexplored terrain to keep it from turning stale overnight. There's still a lot more time left until *Disruptor* makes its way to the stores in the fourth quarter, but I'm confident that the financial backing and Hollywood clout being thrown into the mix are sure to result in a pretty electrifying title.

-Evil Lights



HEY, I DIDN'T PUT 'EM THERE! THE SHOTS CONTAINING TITLES ARE FROM LEVELS STILL IN PROGRESS.



DARKSTALKERS

THE NIGHT WARRIORS

R
REVIEW



DEVELOPER - CAPCOM

PUBLISHER - CAPCOM

FORMAT - CD

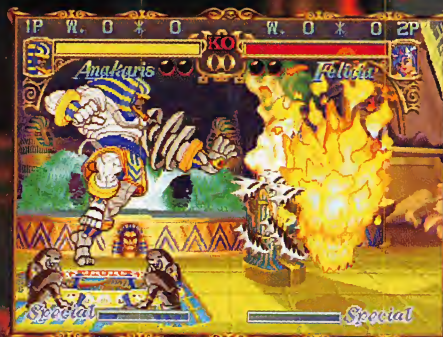
OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - NOW



MR. GOO



I remember the first time I played *Darkstalkers* for the PS. It was at the 1995 E3 in Los Angeles. Little did I know I would finally get to play the final version a full year later at the following E3. Despite the delay, the near-perfect translation Capcom has managed to pull off on the 2-D lacking PlayStation is nothing short of amazing. Though short-lived in the arcades, this game is a healthy addition to anyone's collection.

Darkstalkers is yet another innovative fighter which introduced Capcom's now trademark, anime-style hand-drawn characters which become overly exaggerated a la squash-and-stretch Disney-style animation, not to mention play mechanics similar to *SF Alpha*, with *SF* style commands, special bars, chain combos and even alpha counters.

Although this sounds like yet another *SF*, *DS* is thankfully an entirely different game due to the huge sprite action, gameplay, and the amount of personality that was lovingly added to every character, (maybe even more so than *SF*). Pausing the game during a match is highly recommended, because so much comedy is hidden in the hundreds of frames of animation, like Bishamon cutting Sasquatch in half, exposing Sasquatch's rib eye insides, or Victor's face-first fall, where his brain and still-attached eyeballs bounce up in and out of his skull cap on impact. Now that's comedy!

Though no real storyline is known for *DS*, each fight takes place in different time periods, where 10 fighters (plus two non-playable bosses) each have their own reason for competing. *DS* is host to some of the most unorthodox of characters in a videogame, yet surprisingly each plays very well. Demitri the Vampire, Felicia the Catwoman (meeoow), Rikuo the Merman, Anakaris the Mummy, Jon Talbain the Werewolf, Victor the Frankenstein, Lord Raptor the Zombie, Sasquatch the Bigfoot, Morrigan the Succubus (Capcom really loves you), Bishamon the Samurai, and the two bosses, Huitzil the Robot and Pyron the Alien, are the cast of characters in this monster mash, each with their own detailed backgrounds which add to the characters personality. Take a close look at Sasquatch's background—practically everything moves, including objects far off in the distance, like a tiny bigfoot dude slappin' together a snowman behind a line of hanging fish. Now that's detail, and all with tolerable load time.

Surprisingly, *DS* didn't fall prey to the same knife that gouged out the many frames from *X-Men* on the Saturn. The frame rate is up to par with that of *SF Alpha*, and what's even more incredible is that some moves have as many frames as the Full Animation mode found on the Saturn's *Vampire Hunter*! It seems the programmers have paid special attention to the most exaggerated of moves like Victor's standing roundhouse (Victor Crush) move where you can easily see his





huge calf muscle expand to gigantic proportions. The compromise for this level of detail is evident in his (Victor's) standing animation, which looks fine but can't be more than five frames. ! Thankfully this is not as noticeable on some of the smaller characters. However, what is more than noticeable is the slowdown which ensues during a fight with large characters like Huitzil vs. Sasquatch or Victor. Though it doesn't happen very often it can become more than frustrating to readjust your timing during a combo. Personally I would've rather gone with less frames of animation or parallax in the background to hopefully compensate for the slowdown. None the less, it's still incredible when you take into consideration the fact that the PS isn't exactly a 2-D

workhorse, and that the early version of *DS* suffered from so much slowdown that it's only good use was for still shots.

Graphically, *DS* is top notch Capcom, complemented by slightly-arranged arcade tunes. The sound effects in *DS* are also of a very high quality. You almost feel the blows as they come pumpin' out of your speakers. Every sample is arcade perfect, rich in bass, reminiscent of dubbed kung fu movies of old.

Overall *DS* is a worthy translation, and is a great alternative for players who have worn out their *SF Alphas*. *DS* offers totally original characters, refreshing music, pumpin' sound effects, and a new level of gameplay that's strategically different from *Street Fighter*. With two great PS fighters under Capcom's belt, let's hope their next one (*X-Men*) is of the same caliber as their previous efforts! -Mr. Goo



FADE TO BLACK

R
REVIEW



DEVELOPER - DELPHINE

PUBLISHER - EA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - DIFFICULT

AVAILABLE - JULY



ORION

Taking the popular puzzle/action mechanics from *Out of this World* and *Flashback*, Delphine has created another great title to add to their lineup, but this time they've gone a bit further than just changing the backdrops. While *Fade to Black* is a direct sequel to *Flashback*, the only thing linking it to the original game are the characters. Almost a cross between *Doom* and *Resident Evil*, *Fade to Black* is totally 3D, a radical change from the "platform" look Delphine's last two games in the series shared.

As explained in the last issue of *GameFan*, you're Conrad Hart, deep in cryogenic sleep after narrowly escaping the Morphs at the end of *Flashback*. 50 years have gone by, and the ship carrying your slumbering body was just found, by your old enemies. The Morphs, sorta angry at your actions 50 years ago, throw you into New Alcatraz. Just as the name suggests, you're left in a high security prison to rot. But as luck would have it, a human rebel somewhere in the prison has heard of your past conflicts with the aliens, and decides to help you. He leaves you a pistol, a pocket communicator, and a chance for escape.

The graphics in *Fade to Black* have gone through quite an upgrade. The 3D is very impressive, and fits this game perfectly. The camera floats a few feet above Conrad, and it zooms in allowing you to "peek" around corners and fire your gun effectively. The music has also been upgraded to cinema quality. It not only sounds great, but builds in intensity when potential surprises are imminent.

The only real downside in *Fade to Black* is the same problem all of the games in this series suffer from, it's too freakin' hard. Thankfully, you can save at any time, but that still doesn't excuse getting shot in the back every few minutes.

Fade to Black has the perfect blend of puzzles, action, and story. The quest is long and hard, but fun. So if you've beaten *Resident Evil*, and need something to tide you over until *Tomb Raider's* released, look no further.

-Orion



• LEVEL 3 MINI WALK THROUGH •

(DUE TO THE DIFFICULTY WE HAD WITH IT, WE THOUGHT WE'D HELP YOU OUT.)

1. CONRAD ARRIVES

- read message from Sarah
- use door (S)

2. MARS MAIN HALL

- kill guard drone
- kill Morph to the left
- run forward (secret room)



3. MARS SECRET ACCESS

- use energy recharge device
- use locker (get bouncing mine)
- use door (SE)



4. MARS MAIN HALL

- kill Morph
- kill stabbing Morph
- run (N) take first left
- pass cars, kill stabbing Morph
- push button by cars
- push button until all cars are going
- follow cars to first set of doors
- wait for car to open door



5. MARS RISIDIUM DEPOT

- use locker (NW) (find key to Complex 2)
- use locker (N) (find key to Complex 4)
- use locker (NE) (find bouncing mine)
- **SAVE GAME**
- use door (S)

6. MARS MAIN HALL

- follow car left
- use first door on left

7. MARS M3 COMPLEX ROOM

- jump plates and electric pads
- shoot robot drone
- use locker (find risidium)
- jump plates and electric pads
- use door (S)

8. MARS MAIN HALL

- turn left



- go to first door on left
- wait for car to open doors

9. MARS GUARD ROOM

- stay with car to next room



10. MARS ARSENAL

- watch single box to left Morph
- kill Morph
- check all lockers (find Mars key 1, find Mars key 3, find 2 bouncing mines, find heat-seeking bullets)
- use door (S)

11. MARS GUARD ROOM

- check locker (find energy recharge)
- use control panel ("Laboratory door unlocked")
- use door (S)

12. MARS MAIN HALL

- run to end of hallway
- wait for car to open door



13. MARS MAIN DEPOT

- kill 2 Morphs
- use locker (find anti-radiation shield, find bouncing mine)
- use energy recharge device
- use door (W)

14. MARS MAIN HALL

- run back to Mars guard room

15. MARS GUARD ROOM

- activate anti-radiation shield
- **SAVE GAME**
- use door (E)

16. MARS M2

- run past worm hand (take damage)

either:

- de-activate anti-radiation shield:
- "Warning: Radioactive Zone"
- taking damage

- radiation death movie

• **RELOAD**

else:

- run into hall
- kiss stabbing Morph
- use door north

17. MARS RESEARCH LAB

- use locker (SW) (find key to Complex 5)
- use door south
- if use locker (N), die

18. MARS M2

- use second door on right

19. MARS MAIN HALL

- run to car area
- use door (SW)

20. MARS M5

- kill guard drone (2)
- use locker, find armor-piercing bullets, find risidium cartridge
- use door (N)

21. MARS MAIN HALL

- turn right run to end
- turn right, go to first door on left

22. MARS M6

- step on pressure pad, force bars appear
- use locker, find risidium cartridge
- jump electric plates
- jump electric plates
- jump electric plates
- don't touch pressure pad
- use door (E)

23. MARS MAIN HALL

- turn right
- pass hallway on left
- use door on left (W)

24. MARS M1 COMPLEX 3

- step on plate to deactivate far force bars
- use door (W)

25. MARS MAIN HALL

- turn right (S)
- run (S)
- turn right at first hallway (W)
- use second door on right

26. MARS M1 COMPLEX

- walk over plate to deactivate force bars
- use locker, find risidium
- use door (E)

27. MARS MAIN HALL

- use door in front of you



28. MARS M4

• **SAVE GAME**

- step on pressure pad, force bars go down, spider is loose
- kill spider
- use locker, find risidium cartridge
- activate radioactive shield

- use door (E)



29. MARS M2

- use door (2)

30. MARS EXCAVATION ROOM

- kill guard drone
- kill black drone
- kill Morph
- read message from computer
- use risidium cartridge with excavator, excavator moves
- follow excavator

31. MARS M2

- excavator stops

either:

- use risidium cartridge with excavator, excavator moves
- follow excavator

32. MARS RESEARCH LAB

- excavator runs into worm
- excavator/worm movie

else:

- use door (N)

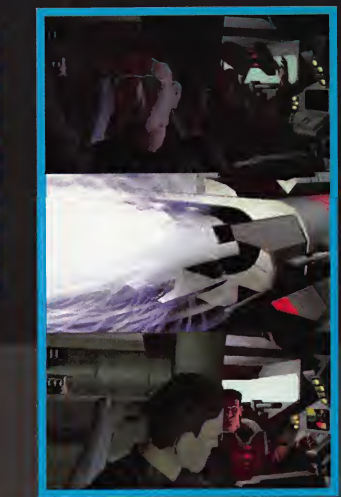


33. MARS RESEARCH LAB

- shoot worm with armor-piercing bullets

then:

- use locker, find document, find bouncing mine
- **SAVE GAME**
- read message from Sarah
- read message from Sarah
- teleport



P PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - ATD
PUBLISHER - ACTIVISION
FORMAT - CD
OF PLAYERS - 1
DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
AVAILABLE - OCTOBER



The best puzzle action game I've ever seen...

From ATD, the people who brought you *Cybermorph* and its follow-up *Battlemorph*, comes a totally unique action-puzzle title on the PlayStation called *Blast Chamber*. Since ATD is responsible for two of the mere handful of memorable Jaguar titles, it seems only right that they should take the opportunity to strut their stuff on a system like the PS.

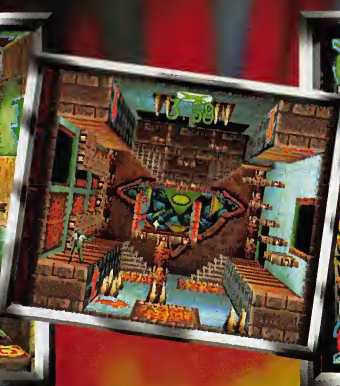
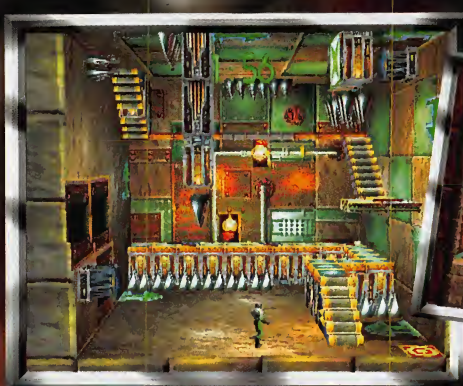
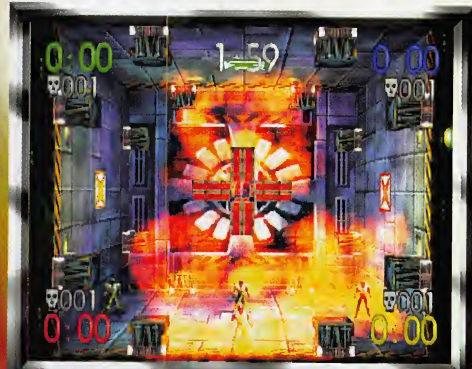
Blast Chamber, coming to you care of Activision, places you inside a series of large cube-shaped rooms with deco straight out of a bonus round of *The Running Man* (minus Richard Dawson, of course). You're in control of the little guy in the green outfit, and it's your job to run around the room until you get to the green square. This takes you to the next room. Sounds simple? For shame! Getting around those rooms is a taxing affair. In order to beat a stage, you've got to avoid things like energy flares and fans blowing insane streams of air so you can get to the arrows which, when kicked, rotate the room on its side. That done, you need to manage your way around the new surface and just keep spinning that cube until you finally figure a way over and around

BLAST chamber

all of the obstacles, grab the crystal located in every room, and hop onto that green square. As if it weren't enough to be carefully working your way around opening-and-closing pits and precisely jumping from one platform to the next, there's the added pressure of the timer counting down. When it hits zero, you pop like a pigeon having a feast of Alka-Seltzer.

Blast Chamber's about 60% done at this time, so there are going to be a few more modes of play added besides the frenetic four-player game already in the version we have. But you have my word that this October, when both the PS and Saturn versions are released (I'll hide my face on this one), you'll be bound to... um... have a blast...

-Evil Lights





Sony of America is getting ready to bring Asmik's PlayStation flight sim *Sidewinder* over for a domestic release, albeit with the new title *Bogey Dead 6*. Despite the name change, the game remains relatively untouched. But don't expect a flight sim that's brimming with minute details; *Bogey* pretty much puts the emphasis on the dog-fight and leaves the strategy out of the gamut. Which isn't to dis that aspect of the game: most flight sims usually make me shrivel up in pain. *Bogey*, on the other hand, is much easier to take: the missions are straightforward, the control is problem-free, and the difficulty isn't too killer. And if you link-up to fight head-on against a friend, the game turns into all-out carnage.

The only hitch in the game is the *sloooow* pace of movement in relation to the ground: *Bogey* is the flight sim equivalent of 3D0 *Need for Speed*. While this can get annoying, it doesn't really hinder anything; the mission areas are small enough (or, unfortunately, *seem* small enough due to the relatively featureless scenery) to make the snail's pace velocity tolerable. And like the areas in which they take place, the missions themselves aren't super-complex. Even though you're given objectives through each stage that vary from the basic destroy-the-target to defend-and-protect, every mission still boils down to finding out where those red radar dots are in the airspace around you and having fun as you send a few rockets up their tails.

BOGEY DEAD 6

R
REVIEW



DEVELOPER - PERASIS
PUBLISHER - SCEA
FORMAT - CD
OF PLAYERS - 1/LINK
DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE
AVAILABLE - JULY

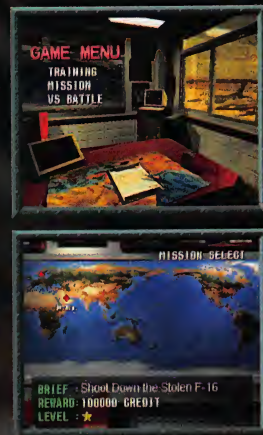


EVIL LIGHTS
"Miss-eye-uhl closing in!"

Bogey's soundtrack consists of adrenaline-rock in the tradition of flight classics like "Danger Zone." As this is a flight sim, it doesn't get too annoying. Also in typical flight sim style, you've got lots of voices coming in over the radar giving "advice" and critiquing your skills. These *do* get annoying. Every time I hear the voice over the intercom shout "Miss-eye-uhl closing in!" for a second I think that I've got a Biblical character chasing down my fighter.

Bogey Dead 6 is a fine attempt at pushing the flight sim a little bit past the *Air Combat* stage, but it never quite flies to the heights attained in *Warhawk*. But if you're only a lukewarm flight fan such as myself, then *Bogey's* for you.

-Evil Lights





STREET RACER

P
PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - VIVID IMAGE
PUBLISHER - UBI SOFT
FORMAT - CD
OF PLAYERS - 1-8 (W/LINK)
DIFFICULTY - EASY
AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER



Evil Lights

When *Street Racer* was released on the Super NES (and Genesis, in Europe) some time ago, it was widely perceived as a *Super Mario Kart* clone. But *Street Racer* didn't possess the charm of *SMK*, nor the little intricacies that make almost every Miyamoto game a masterpiece. Now, the arrival of the sequel is upon us.

As the game currently stands, you can select from a group of eight characters: all of which have strength and weaknesses in handling attributes, though the differences are currently only slight. The cast is as follows: Hodja, an old-timer magician; Frank, who treads a fine line between Frankenstein's Monster and the Incredible Hulk; Suzulu, an African tribal warrior; Biff, a tough guy whose portrait shares more than a passing resemblance to one T. Hawk in *SSFII*; Raphael, the cliché cool guy; Surf, who plays the part of the Sexy Female; Helmut, a German Red Baron-type; and Sumo, who is E. Honda with collagen injections in his lips. Control is pretty basic: pressing Up is to jump; L1 or R1 allows your character to deliver his trademark attack to either the left or right; L2 momentarily unleashes your go-cart's "special ability," which, depending on who your character is, can be anything from a flying biplane to a snorting rhinoceros; R2 delivers your character's special attack. Along the way, your





character can power up with items laid about the course to be run over and picked up. If you want a different view of the action at hand, you can press Triangle to toggle between normal, zoomed in or out, and bird's eye views to get a better assessment of the track.

And so I've come to the subject of the *track*, which is looking to be *Street Racer's* most disappointing aspect so far. Although the graphics are pretty clean, the courses' layouts are sorely lacking in any outstanding features that scream "unique" or make driving through them interesting. As a matter of fact, Surf's stage—the Beach—can be outright confusing. And it's not that "frustrating-but-fun"-confusing of the beach stage in *SMK*; it so happens that the actual path looks exactly like the sand on the track's sides, which you're not allowed to navigate. This is part of the big problem: while racing, you're kept on a completely flat surface, and although there are 3D pieces of scenery which rise smoothly up out of the ground on the side of the track, you're not allowed to



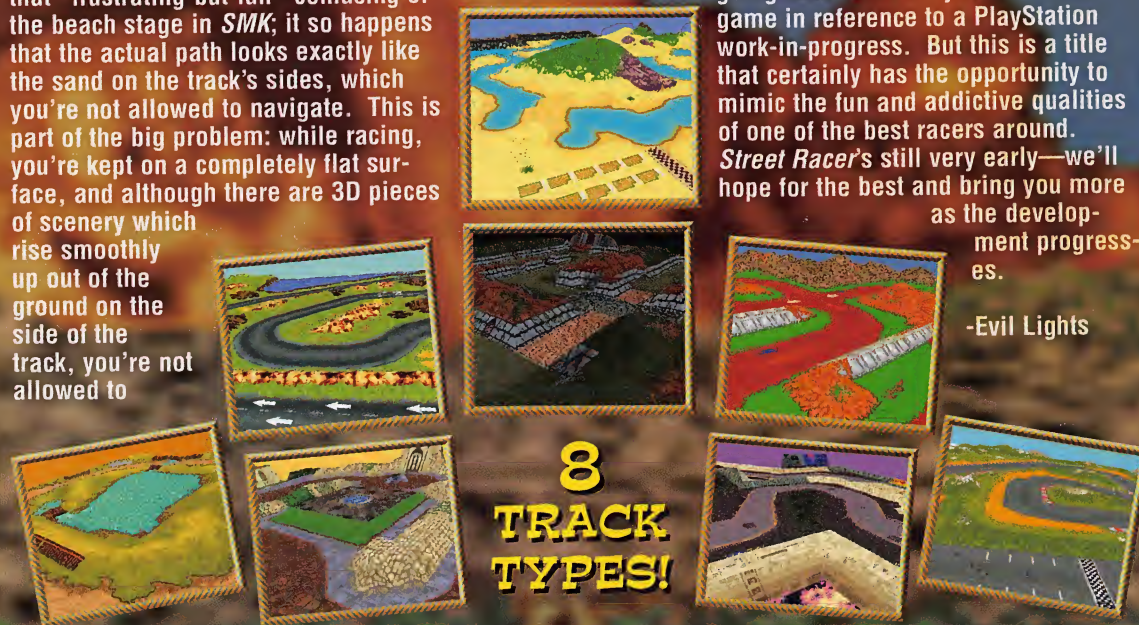
drive over them no matter how slight the embankment. On a system that is so adept at handling 3D masterfully, there should be some opportunity for your go-kart to escape the second dimension.

This has hopefully been noted by Vivid Image, the game's developer. But while this can be fixed with just a bit more code, the course layouts need total overhaul in some parts before they can even be worth noting.

If Vivid Image fixes all of these things before release, then *Street Racer* may turn out to be a pretty wild package, especially with the ability to play up to 8 players at a time—a feature never supported in *SMK*. It seems absurd to keep going back to a four-year old SNES game in reference to a PlayStation work-in-progress. But this is a title that certainly has the opportunity to mimic the fun and addictive qualities of one of the best racers around. *Street Racer's* still very early—we'll hope for the best and bring you more as the development progresses.

-Evil Lights

8 TRACK TYPES!



P
PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - CRYSTAL DYN.

PUBLISHER - CRYSTAL DYN.

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED

AVAILABLE - SEPT. 9



TAKUMI

Kain

An ambitious young noble whose lust for vengeance overrides his sense of judgment, Kain is resurrected from the dead by the Necromancer Mortanius, for whom he must perform a task of great importance, although what and why it is not revealed to him. Kain's quest leads him on a torturous journey of self-discovery as his curse of vampirism takes irrevocable hold on his soul. The once righteous

Kain must slaughter the innocent to survive—the blood is the life.



BLOOD OMEN LEGACY OF KAIN

Mortanius

Mortanius is an ancient sorcerer skilled in the arts of death magic. His power has accumulated over the centuries, making him the most potent wizard in all of Nosgoth. His power is tempered with mercy and judgment, however, since he is one of the Circle of Nine (the Protectors of Hope)—the magicians whose magic preserves the order of magical power in the world.

The toils of his magical practices with the dead have made Mortanius little more than a skin and bone husk whose fragility belies his ultimate power.



Vorador

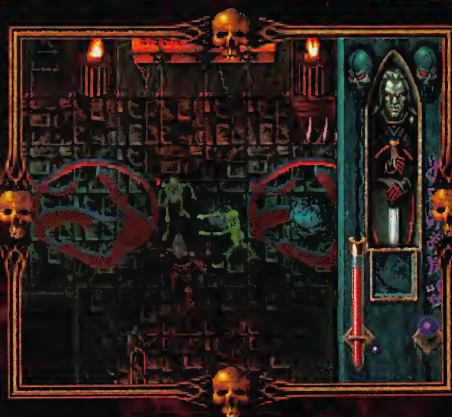
Vorador is a proud, arrogant and long-lived vampire. He has lived since ancient times, and seen the world grow from being young and vibrant to sour and corrupt. He has feasted upon the teeming human cattle of Nosgoth and learned everything there is to know about the world, reading his victims' thoughts as he preyed upon their blood.

The great vampire purges, brought to the world by the Sarafan, caused much suffering to Vorador. The Sarafan murdered his friends, lovers, and his vampire children and gave him a valid reason to hate the living. He fought back once, destroying part of the Circle who supported the Sarafan, but it was not enough. The purges eventually drove him into hiding, and so he became lost to the world of Nosgoth.

Malek, fanatical warrior-priest of the Sarafan, is Ward of the Circle. He is the defender and paladin to the Circle of Nine, and as so, has vowed allegiance to their protection. Long ago, his inaction allowed several members of the Circle to be murdered by a vicious vampire; and for his crime his soul was fused to the metal of his own armor, which he has inhabited ever since, and will do for eternity. In life, Malek was known as a ruthless and cold-blooded murderer by enemy generals and, particularly, by the vampires who he and his Sarafan cohorts hunted relentlessly. Vampire purges continue under Malek's direction for hundreds of years. In unlife, Malek stands defiant in battered rune-covered armor, his helmet's plume braided from the bloodied scalps of his many victims. Purged of his humanity by the Circle's sorcery, Malek's hate has been entirely focused on exacting revenge upon the vampire that caused him to be damned for eternity.

Malek





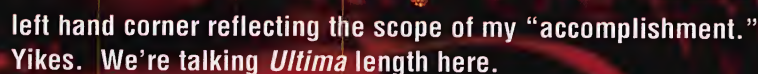
One hundred and sixty *thousand* screens. I know that's a weird way to start a review, but that's what I think about when I think of *Kain*... Do you have any idea how insane that is? I mean, *Zelda III* had, what, 2,000 screens? And considering how much fun I had playing the 12 or so screens in our version, I know *Kain's* gonna be something special.

Companies often stretch the truth about how long their games are. SQUARE used to be great at this; I remember their sales literature promising that it would take 50 hours to beat *Final Fantasy Mystic Quest* (my dog could have beaten that game under 20!), and 80 or so (snort!) for *Chrono Trigger*. Oh, we all had a good laugh about those. But when Crystal says that *Kain's* going to take 100+ hours to beat, I've got to wonder if maybe they're leaning just a bit too much on the conservative side. The preview version we received could only be played for about 2 hours, but after completing that little task, I checked the overworld map (which lights up the areas you've visited) and found it to be 2 solid screens of dark, untraveled lands, with about 3 white pixels in the lower-



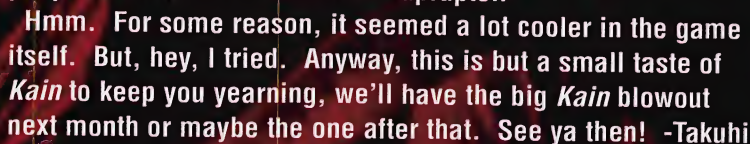
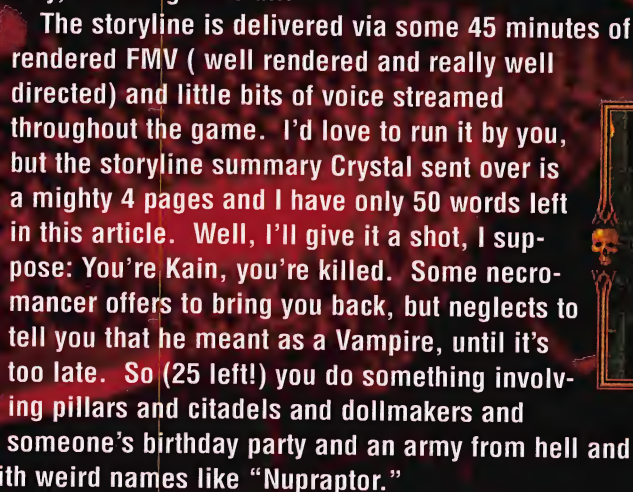
"THE FEELING OF VENGEANCE IS NOTHING COMPARED TO THE LIFE-TIME OF PAIN THAT WILL FOLLOW ME FOR ALL ETERNITY..."





The graphics really have to be seen to be appreciated, and considering their sheer amount, I've come away in awe. What you can't see in these shots are the incredibly well done lighting effects that permeate literally every area of the game. Lightning crashes, clouds block out the sun, flame flickers, burning corpses that light your way, all that good stuff.

The prophecy foretold rape and torture, death and destruction on cataclysmic levels, and that it cannot be stopped. The peaceful pastoral land of Mithosgoth **WILL** be massacred.



The Legions of the Nemesis

An ancient oracle once prophesied the march of an enormous army that would lay waste to the last havens of peace in Nosgoth and bring about the end of civilization. The oracle said little of its origin, but noted that it would gather in the wastes of northern Nosgoth, and crush all who opposes its expansion, and that the people would name it the Legion of the Nemesis.





DEVELOPER	- TAITO
PUBLISHER	- ACCLAIM
FORMAT	- CD
# OF PLAYERS	- 1-2
DIFFICULTY	- INTERMEDIATE
AVAILABLE	- JUNE



K. LEE
 "JUST ONE MORE
 GAME AND I'LL
 QUIT. NO, REALLY,
 JUST ONE MORE..."



One of the more addictive and challenging puzzle games to hit the arcades (and almost every home system) last year is back. Acclaim is releasing *Bust-A-Move 2: Arcade Edition* for your PlayStation this June, but sadly this is a sequel in name only, with only a few improvements over the original title.

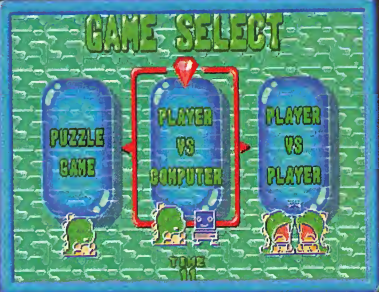
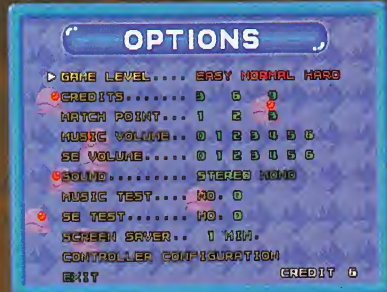
Although the added refinements are small (story mode, different backgrounds, better 1P mode, slightly different bubbles, etc.), the basic object of the game hasn't changed: to match 3 bubbles of same color, making them disappear.

Sure, that sounds easy enough, but *Bust-A-Move 2* takes quite a bit of practice. As you can tell from the screen shots, the bubbles are all placed on the top of the screen in random orders and patterns. You fire bubbles from the bottom, trying to connect at least three of the same color, which sends them flying (and popping) off the bottom of the screen. Any other colors that fall as a result end up shooting up into your opponent's side. If you can think ahead and set it up right (no easy feat when your opponent's sending you scads of balls), you can "throw" bubbles upon bubbles your opponent's way. But time is of the essence, as the screen moves down con-

stantly, and if the bubbles ever reach the bottom of your screen, you lose.

Again, *Bust A Move 2* sounds simple, but the game can become quite hectic. You'll find it hard to contain an evil cackle when you bank a bubble off the wall into a tight corner, making a difficult match, and dumping about twenty bubbles on your opponent. Poor Orion ("But I am good, really!"), scrambling to salvage a bit of self-respect out of his ever-growing mass of glowing spheroids.

Bust A Move 2 is one of those titles that'll have you trying to squeeze in one last game before you leave for work. And even though this "sequel" doesn't really add a whole lot to the original formula, it's still a game no puzzle fan will want to be without (and chicks dig it!). -K. Lee



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AUG



PLAYSTATION PREVIEWS

CONTRA-Legacy of War

Contra is all new for '96 and features a 3D mode using red/blue 3D glasses. The glasses add scary realism to the battles as you lay waste in vast war zones. We should have a Contra preview in the September GF.



MK Trilogy

All three MKs crammed on together in one hellish apocalypse • Playable bosses from MKs past • New characters along with all the old nemeses • 26 combatants • 26 levels • And more moves and codes than you can shake a fatality at • Sign Me Up!

Jet Moto

Twisted Metal 2

Jet Moto with TruePhysics™ and Twisted Metal 2: World Tour. SingleTrac-Sony-Power!





Every now and then a game comes along that reminds us that 32 and 64-bit game systems have the potential to do a lot more than just make 3D versions of old 2D games. *Nights* is one of that small handful of games that truly is something you've never played before, and is one of maybe 3 or 4 of the same handful of that you'd actually want to play, not just for a little while, but over and over, and over again.

Nights (as a crusader for conventional capitalization, I refuse to call the game by its proper name, *NIGHTS*) is one of the most immensely playable games ever. This game gives you the most realistic feeling of flight a game could ever let you experience. And I don't mean, boring, gauge-checking "Microsoft Flight Simulator" flight, I mean real flight, the kind you experience (we all knew I'd get to this cliché sooner or later) "only in your dreams." The control is sensational, easy to pick up and deep enough to grow with you for days, until you truly master the art of soaring through loops, creating enemy-sucking vortexes, and doing flashy tricks just to show off.

Nights' graphics are absolutely stunning. The backgrounds, textures, enemies and such are all nice (*really* nice, actually), but it's the colors that astound me. I mean, surely *Nights* uses the same color palette that every other Saturn game uses, right? But this looks like no other game ever made... Everything's so lush and beautiful, and those bosses! I don't want to start any rumors here, but it's pretty clear that some of the folks in Sonic Team's graphics department aren't exactly following the

instructions on their prescription medication, if you get my drift. *Nights* is the game I'm gonna buy an RGB monitor for. You just have to see it.

A major part of the graphics is the mood, and this game takes its theme seriously. Everything has the brilliantly surreal quality of real dreams, from the spooky lighting of Claris and Elliot's intro (two kids who are dorky even in their *own* dreams) to the randomly misplaced items in the stages, and a bizarre series of enemies culminating with a fat, bouncing opera diva with teeth in a place where one should *definitely* not have teeth.

A major contributor to the mood is the sound. Sega has a special knack for making freakishly upbeat music, but *Nights* easily eclipses all past efforts. This is probably the only soundtrack I've ever heard that's capable of making Daytona's *Blue Skies* sound depressingly morbid by comparison. Especially impressive is the techno-ish boss music, which is personalized for each boss with such details as actual opera singing for the aforementioned opera boss. The sound effects are cool too, and when you're flying for loops the game rewards your success by making each consecutive loop





ring out in a slightly higher tone (it sounds stupid, but it really does add a lot to the game). I don't know about *Nights'* voice though... This might not make it into the final version, but in the one we have, *Nights* shrieks "Aptival!" (I swear!) whenever he runs out of time, as if IBM had slipped Sega a few million dollars to covertly promote their line of personal computers.

Nights is actually the first game to use Sega Graphics Library 3.0, the new development tools (which people always, for some reason, refer to as "an operating system.") that are actually one generation more advanced than the ones used to make *Virtua Fighter 2* and *Sega Rally*. That means many exciting things for Saturn owners: First, it gives you insane effects like the perfect light-source shading on the characters in *Nights*, and second, it means that soon every developer will be able to do some of the same amazing things with their own products. I'm not sure how much of *Nights'* majesty is due to the new software, and how much is due to two years of Yuji Naka's team's programming skill, but whatever the cause, the result is impressive. There are a ton of polygons going in this game, and the textures look great even when they're scaled in. There's still a bit of clipping and pop-up in this version, but Sega assures us that it'll all be gone in the final.

For a mere \$69.99, you'll get *Nights* and Sega's new analog pad, an amazing device that deserves a couple of paragraphs of its own. Sega's pad is everything that, in my opinion, the Nintendo-64's controller should have been—comfortable and easy to use with a sensible button arrangement and a NeoCD-inspired indented analog pad exactly where it should be. You won't be stuck groping for some weird half-stick stuck in the middle of the pad on this one.

The size and shape of the controller are equally brilliant. Though it looks a bit silly, the molded bottom fits the contours of your hand perfectly, as if you were grasping a big friendly jelly donut. One warning, though: Sega might also sell *Nights* without the pad, a deal you'll probably want to stay away from. Not just because you'll be missing out on such a lovely peripheral, but also because this game will absolutely *smash* your thumb if you play it with a normal controller.



Nights has definitely got the play mechanics to beat all contenders, and the only question left is, will it have the length necessary to compete with *Mario* and *Crash Bandicoot*? Our version has but 3 levels (of 7) and 2 bosses (of ?), so we'll have to wait and see... But we'll find out soon enough, as the US release of *Nights* is coming in August! Imagine... you'll be playing the first 3rd generation Saturn game in a couple of weeks. What a summer, eh?

-Takuhi

P PREVIEW

LAYOUT - TAKUHI



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - SONIC TEAM

PUBLISHER - SEGA

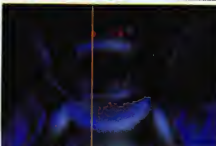
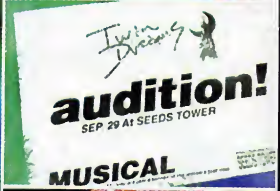
FORMAT - CD

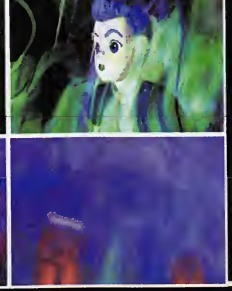
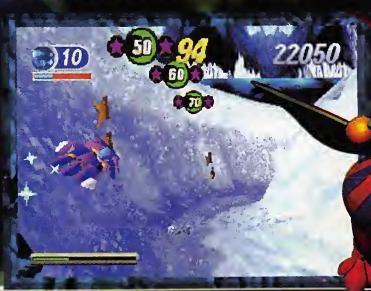
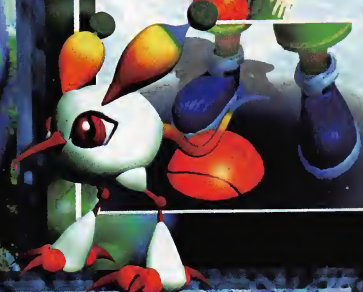
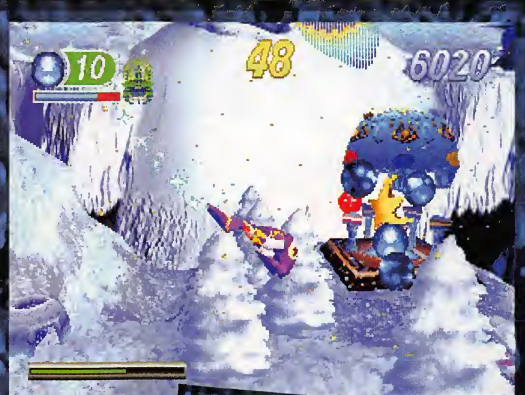
OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - ???

AVAILABLE - AUGUST









Virtua Fighter Kids is possibly the weirdest game I've ever played. It's basically just *Virtua Fighter 2* with a few subtle enhancements, cute-ified backgrounds and music, and characters whose heads are many thousands of times bigger than they used to be. But even though (as of yet) it brings no new play mechanics to the series, it's a ton of fun to play.

All of the characters look 15 or so years younger, except for Shun (who seems about 70 years younger, making him only 50 or so) and Lion (who would have been just an embryo, which actually would have been pretty cool). They're all totally remodeled, but the most striking difference is in their faces, which have animated textures that constantly change to reflect a variety of emotions.

The faces are hyper cute... Perpetually sleepy Shun, giggly Pai, cocky Akira, love-struck Jeffrey, innocent little Lion... They're almost too cute, in fact, in that I actually feel guilty every time I hit an opponent. I mean, Lau (who *still* looks 100% nuts, even as a child), sure, I could watch him die a horrible death and just laugh, but PAI? Look at her! She's so HAPPY! Hitting her seems so wrong...

The voices are awesome, too. They're actually the same voices from *VF2*, just sped up and at a much higher pitch. It's amazing how a voice sample that made us all groan when we played *VFII* (like Jacky's "I'm faster than lightning!") can get the entire staff to "Awwwww" in unison in this version. I don't even want to talk about how cute (though subtly deranged) Pai's laugh is.

If you're a *VF* fan, playing the game's a total trip... The dynamics are totally changed by the size of the characters' heads, although every move and combo from *VF2* is present. If you play on "Kids" mode, you get a couple of gameplay enhancements: The game moves about 20% faster, there are *Fighting Vipers*-style 3-angle instant replays (and a similar finishing





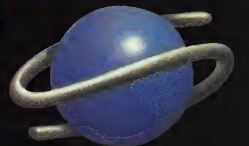
hit system), and every character has at least one new combo. Though I haven't really played the two side-by-side, it does seem a lot easier to link moves together, but I'm not sure if that's an intentional change.

Our version only had two of the eight game modes that are promised in the final, so we don't know what else AM2 might do with this one. We've seen pictures of two totally original backgrounds (one for Shun and one for Pai) which aren't in this version (all it has is cutesy-style VF2 backgrounds), so all sorts of things might happen before this one hits the store shelves. Until then, you might want to get as much play as you can out of VF2, 'cause after seeing this one (especially the nauseatingly cute intro) you'll never look at it quite the same way again. -Takuhi



P PREVIEW

LAYOUT - TAKUHI



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - AM2

PUBLISHER - SEGA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

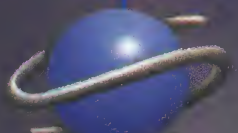
DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - 4TH QUARTER



TAKUHI

P PREVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - EA

PUBLISHER - EA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - JUNE



EVIL LIGHTS
Road Rash?
AGAIN?!



Axle finished in First Place.



You're outta money and outta luck!
Game over, man!



I remember when I played the 32-bit incarnation of *Road Rash* for the first time two years ago at SCES in Chicago. I thought, "Wow! The first 3DO game with some semblance of actual gameplay!" Ah yes... 3DO *Road Rash* was certainly a treat. And now, in 1996, so is the Saturn version, but in a slightly different way. If you're thinking of "treat" in the sense of a sugary-sweet morsel of goodness you might receive on a Halloween night from a kindly neighbor, you're incorrect. But if the image of liverspot-bedecked Mrs. Esposito dropping into your trick-or-treat sack a few Tootsie Pops and a Baby Ruth with a razor-sharp piece of metal lodged into the center of the bar, then yes: you're absolutely correct.

Road Rash Saturn, like the PlayStation version, is a two-year old 3DO game ported directly onto one of the new systems. The scenery on the courses is ultra-pixelated when it scales up, not to mention incredibly repetitive. The pop-up is also extreme, but I'm not trying to hide the fact that pop-up exists, as it most certainly does in even the latest Saturn and PS titles... just not this badly anymore. And the music... gah. I happen to have a personal

dislik-
ing for
after-
native-
grunge, so I won't go beyond
saying that many of the bands considered "hot" two
years ago have since dwindled into obscurity.

The really sad thing, though, is *how good a concept Road Rash is!!!* This is complemented by the single excellent feature of the game—its control. *RR* handles extremely well, better than many of those same next-gen games which are *not* ultra-pixelated or repetitive. I would love to see the series go on, and ports to the PlayStation and Saturn should have been the first step beyond the 3DO version. The control is a teaser of what could have been... luckily there's always a next time, and I really doubt the *Road Rash* franchise will cease to exist. So, deep breath... OK. I have faith in Electronic Arts; really I do. There's going to come a time when the Saturn *Road Rash* will just seem like a bad dream, but for now the game is pure roadkill.

-Evil Lights



THE CITY



SIERRA NEVADA



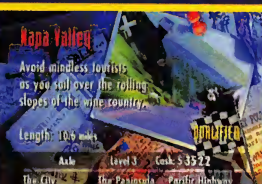
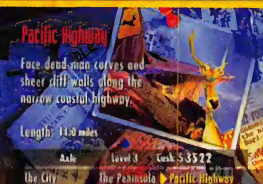
PENINSULA



NAPA VALLEY

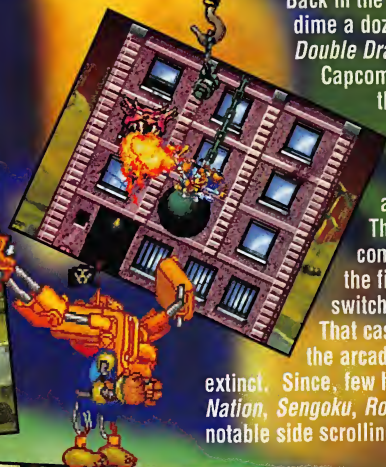


P. C. H.



NOT DIRTY AS IN FILTHY
MINDED, BUT RATHER UN-
SHOWERED OR STINKING.

THREE DIRTY DWARVES



Back in the '80s, side-scrolling fighters were a dime a dozen. It all started with games like *Double Dragon* and *River City Ransom*, but when Capcom lit up arcade screens with *Final Fight* the frenzy began. Sega's *Streets of Rage* took things a step further in the late eighties and early nineties adding complex moves, techno sounds and a foxy female to the category. There however, is where it would all come to a screeching halt. The dawn of the fighting game era began and companies switched their focus to a new cash machine. That cash machine is still ringing and thusly the arcade side scroll fighter has all but become extinct. Since, few have come along. SNK's *Mutation Nation*, *Sengoku*, *Robo Army*, and *Super 8 Man* are the only notable side scrolling battles that come to mind. Sega Soft's *Three Dirty Dwarves*



is the first notable attempt to bring back the category. As *SOR* did, *TDD* breaks the old mold, adding new concepts that if I'm not mistaken, will bring back the core audience as well as a whole lotta new comers. The characters in *TDD* are (don't get scared) sports dudes. But these are no ordinary sports dudes. Four genius kids, genetically altered from a military experiment gone wrong, summon three heroic dwarves from a fantasy board game they're playing. The three dwarves are sucked into a trans-dimensional gate and land in the Bronx right in the middle of, you guessed it, a sporting goods store. The kids are separated, the gate is still open, and there are legions of evil Orcs causing havoc everywhere!

P PREVIEW

LAYOUT - E. STORM



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - APPALOOSA

PUBLISHER - SEGA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

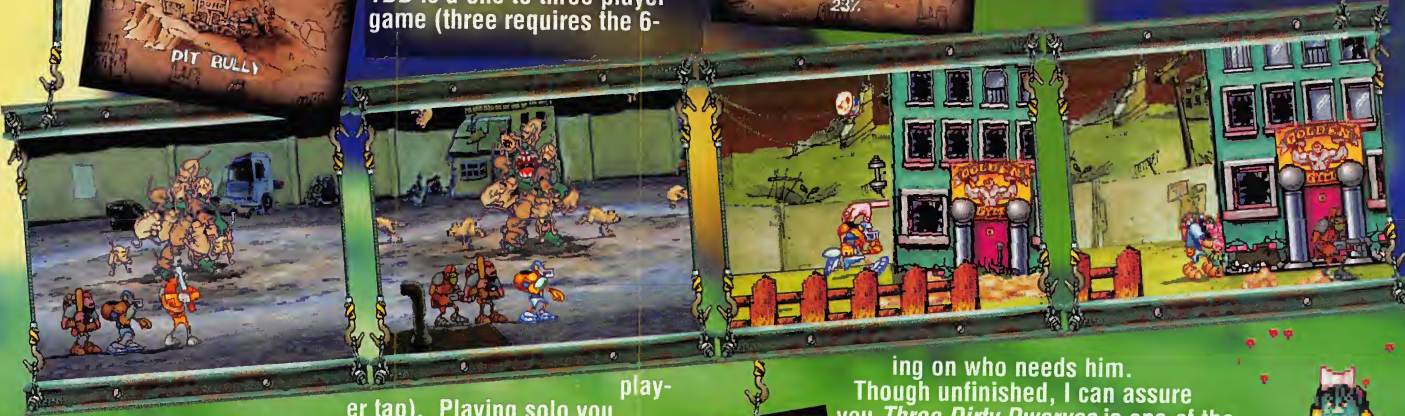
AVAILABLE - OCTOBER



The dwarves don't know what the heck sports are so they just pile on lots of equipment and throw everything. This cool concept brings to the game some truly hilarious situations. The characters themselves are hand drawn, super detailed and super animated. Graphically it all comes together with line scrolling floors, mucho parallax and some truly innovative 3D.



The game looks gorgeous (great art) and plays extremely well. Multiple engines insure against boredom and the bosses are truly unique. Even the loading screen is cool. As each level loads counting upwards the percent loaded, grunts and groans accompany as if the dwarves have already begun warring. TDD is a one to three player game (three requires the 6-



er tap). Playing solo you can control any of the three dwarves, toggling with the R-shift. When you take a hit, another dwarf takes over. Whack the downed opponent to get him back in action before he's off screen. In a two player game you each pick one dirty dwarf and alternate the third depend-

play-



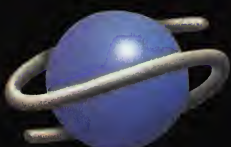
ing on who needs him. Though unfinished, I can assure you *Three Dirty Dwarves* is one of the Saturn's best original games and one that deserves your attention. Sega Soft is off to a blazing start. Look for a review next month.







P PREVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - LOBOTOMY

PUBLISHER - P.I.E.

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER



EVIL LIGHTS
NO STARGATE HERE...

POWERSLAVE

Over the last several months, developers have rushed out a slew of 3D corridor games in an effort to take advantage of the features present in the next-gen systems, and maybe to capitalize just a little bit off the success of titles like *Doom* and *Descent*. Many would argue that in the process, the saturation of these games have created too much of a good thing... at least for the PS and 3DO. With the exception of *Robotica*, the corridors have remained empty on the Saturn; most owners would probably prefer it stay this way rather than to be teased with what "could have been" by the likes of a mediocre title. Thankfully, Lobotomy Software has

taken it upon themselves to ensure that the Saturn's first true *Doom*-style adventure is more than a jaunt through some rusty metal hallways that has you wishing for a tetanus shot.

Powerslave, brought to you courtesy of Playmates, puts an Egyptian theme on the corridor craze. Give me Ancient Egypt and I'm lovin' it: ever since the episode of *G.I. Joe* when the Cobra Guard infiltrated a massive Egyptian tomb, my attention's perked every time I see someone with the head of a dog. The big goal in *Powerslave* is to destroy the evil force attempting to reanim-

ate the body of a long-dead king who has come to grow rather comfy in his state of eternal rest. You select one of the several valleys, shrines, and torch-lit palaces scattered about the overworld map and then race through





Without the use of SGL 3.0 Lobotomy has achieved unprecedented light-source shading



them, fighting off the monsters inhabiting each one. What really stands out in *Powerslave* are the outstanding graphics. It's madness playing this type of game, a first effort, on the Saturn and seeing such amazing light-sourcing effects throughout every dungeon—Lobotomy's outdone themselves on this. All of the walkways, brazier-lit alcoves, and opening gateways cast shadows that pull off the atmosphere every good sepulcher needs. Turning around a bend is a harrowing experience when you can't see more than a few inches in front of you, until slowly, slowly you come into more



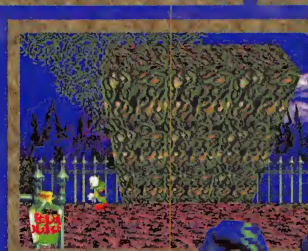
light and start to make out the shape of some wicked goat-thing whipping beams of energy your way. That's beauty. You'll find those nooks and crannies of horror everywhere too: the stage layout in *Powerslave* is complex from the onset. There's level over level, catwalks over walkways over pools of water. And you can roam about freely, looking up or down as you go, or jumping as you see fit—even plunging down into the depths of water. This is another of the stand-out features in *Powerslave*; although being submerged doesn't quite capture the gorgeous light-sourcing effects that swirl about underwater in Core's up-and-coming *Tomb Raider*, there is still a superb ambience to these portions. Stay under too long though, and you begin to feel the hurt until you finally make it up to the surface and breathe the air (until you find the Sobek Mask, and can breathe underwater).

Powerslave's release is sure to make big waves for anyone who's been biting their nails for some real 3D exploration. And the way it looks, it's going to require some long hours exploring—let alone surviving—the catacombs. Things are looking promising, so expect to hear more on *Powerslave* sometime soon...





HAUNT 1



HAUNT 2



P

PREVIEW

LAYOUT - E. STORM



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - AWAY TEAM

PUBLISHER - SEGA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - N/A

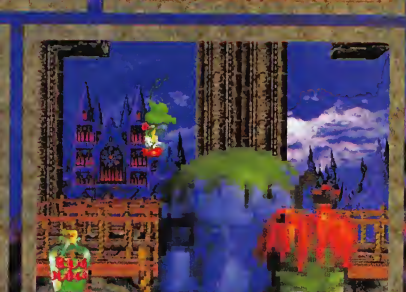
AVAILABLE - NOVEMBER



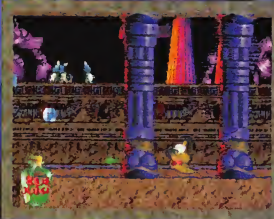
Last year *BUG!* was one of the Saturn's most popular original titles, and for good reason. For the time, *BUG!* was truly revolutionary. Character driven action platform games were nowhere to be seen, let alone one that weaves in and out of line scrolling polygon playfields. Bug himself is a great character, in fact, he ranks among my favorites in the category. He's one of the few American-bred characters I really like. Unfortunately *BUG!*'s musical accompaniment wasn't on par with the coolness of game 1, though it did fit. Sadly, the new tunes are sounding like more of the same, but I've only heard one, and it could be place holder. The game itself however, is receiving much that is new both in gameplay and in depth. Paths are wider, the number of obstacles have at least doubled, Bug can run and spit *Bug Juice* (copyright and TM AwayTeam) at all times, and

BUG TOO!

DESERT 1



GARDEN 3



there are two brand new characters. Bug's dog, aptly named "Maggot," is super cool. He can hover, and runs on his ears! His (its) tongue is like a mile long and he's really fun to control. I like him, good doggie! The other new character however, Superfly, I dislike to the point that I'll never play it. I'm trying to pretend it doesn't exist but am having no luck.



BUG'S DOG
"MAGGOT"
CAN HOVER!



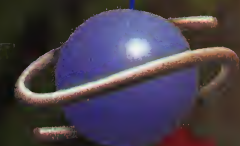
It's, it's... DISCO!! Please make it go away. Nothing on this planet is more foul... nothing!!
Aside from that, *BUG TOO!* is everything I wanted in the sequel and more. The graphics are astounding, with intense lighting effects, beautiful textures and mega polygons. And the new locales are looking not only more dense, but vast to boot. All this and *BUG TOO!* is still way early. I imagine the done product will be among the year's best. Just lose Superfly... Command A, delete!

SPACE
CORKSCREW

DON'T BLOW
CHUNKS!



P PREVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - AM2

PUBLISHER - SEGA

FORMAT - CD

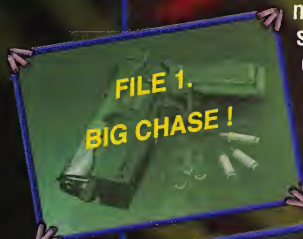
OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - CHALLENGING

AVAILABLE - DECEMBER



TAKUHI
FIRE, RELOAD,
FIRE, RELOAD...



VIRTUA COP 2

Fighting
Vipers, Manx
TT, Virtua Cop
2, and even
Sonic Fighters.
Sega

announced
Saturn versions
of all their
domestically
released Model
2 arcade
games at the
Summer E3,
but this was
the only one far
along enough to be shown. Still, if they
can do this level of quality on the whole
batch, Saturn owners will once again
have a very merry Christmas.

Virtua Cop 2 is still super early—only
about 1/3 of level three has been pro-
grammed into it, and everything you see
here is, of course, subject to change.
But the game is smooth, the textures are
impressive, and the level design is 100%
faithful to the arcade, right down to the
speeding Virtua Coffee truck.

If you haven't played *VC2* in the
arcades yet, it's pretty much exactly what
you'd expect from a *Virtua Cop* sequel.

New this time around are texture-
mapped enemies, fast action driving
scenes (you still just shoot, of
course, *you* don't drive), and multi-
ple routes in each level. Counting
all the course variations, the
game's probably twice as long as
the original, and looks at least
twice as good.

The action's also a lot more
intense this

time
around; old time
Virtua Cop players
may have to dis-
pense with the
classic fire-reload-
fire-reload strategy
and get in the habit
of actually expend-
ing the whole magazine
now and then. The play
control should be perfect
on the Saturn with the
tacky ol' Stunner, but I wouldn't know, as
the current version only allows you to use
the control pad... AAAAAAGGGHHHHH...
You cannot IMAGINE the agony.

VC2 will be hitting Saturns everywhere
this fall, and (with the proper peripheral)
looks like it'll be an expe-
rience well worthy
of the Virtua
name.

-TAKUHI





THE MANGA VIDEO - GAMEFAN GIVEAWAY

From the producers of "Akira" comes the most eagerly-anticipated anime event of the year, "Ghost in the Shell." In celebration of the June 18th release of "Ghost in the Shell," Manga Video and GameFan will be giving away a host of cool "Ghost in the Shell" prizes.

Here's how to win, the old fashioned way: Answer the following questions:

1. In what year does "Ghost in the Shell" take place?
2. What is the codename of the Puppet Master?

Simply put your name, address, city, state, zip, age and phone with the correct answers and mail them to GameFan Magazine at: 5137 Clareton Dr. Agoura Hills, CA 91301. All entries must be received by September 15th.

Here's how to win without mailing in: Watch for the weekly questions starting June 18th on the Manga Video/"Ghost in the Shell" website, at <http://www.manga.com/manga>

HERE'S WHAT YOU WIN:

1 Grand Prize Winner will receive: 1 framed "Ghost in the Shell" poster, a complete Manga Video library, valued at \$700 dollars, featuring the brand new cyber-tech thriller "Ghost in the Shell," and the next generation console of his/her choice (Sony PlayStation, Sega Saturn, or Nintendo64).

Five First Prize Winners will receive: 1 copy of "Ghost in the Shell" plus the Sony PlayStation or Sega Saturn game of his/her choice and a one year subscription to GameFan.

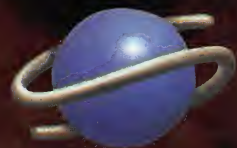
Ten Runners-up will receive: a one-year membership in the Manga Video fan club and a one year GameFan subscription.

Winners with the correct answers will be chosen by a random drawing by Manga Video on September 30th 1996.



Enter the contest by sending your answers to Ghost in the Shell Contest, c/o GameFan Magazine, 5137 Clareton Dr. Suite #210, Agoura Hills, CA 91301. All Winners will be notified by mail. All entries must be submitted on plain white paper. Postcards will be accepted. Each entry must have your name and address. Multiple entries accepted, but each must be post-marked separately. The deadline for all entries is September 15, 1996, and all entries must be received by this date to be eligible. Die Hard GameFan and Manga Video and their affiliates are not responsible for late or lost mail. Employees of GameFan, Manga Video and their affiliates are not eligible. Sixteen (16) winners including (1) Grand Prize winner will be selected by the GameFan judges, who shall have complete and sole discretion in selecting the winners. All decisions are final. All taxes on prizes are the sole responsibility of the winners. Winners release GameFan and Manga Video and their subsidiaries and affiliates in all matters relating to the use of prizes. No substitution of prizes or cash equivalent allowed. One prize per family. Winners grant permission to use their names, addresses and photos for advertising or promotional purposes without additional compensation. Contest void where prohibited by law, and otherwise governed by California laws. (C) 1996 Manga Video

P PREVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - PERFECT

PUBLISHER - SOA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - JULY



ORION

I DRIVE A CONVERTIBLE FOR OBVIOUS REASONS. SUCKS IN THE RAIN, THOUGH.



CROSSOVER



SPEEDWAY



CITY HEAT



OCEAN DRIVE

THIS IS ORION WITH YOUR MONDAY MORNING L.A. COMMUTE... LETS HAVE A LOOK AT THOSE FREEWAYS SHALL WE...



CACTUS CREEK



Destruction derby

Up until a few months ago, the Saturn was considered the leading 2D machine and the PlayStation the king of 3D. Recently however, *Nights*, *Panzer Dragoon Zwei*, and *Powerslave*, have all displayed the Saturn's mighty 3D capabilities.

As if they needed to prove their point any further, Sega's worked out a deal to bring out two of the titles that linked the words "3D" and "PlayStation" together, *Wipeout* and *Destruction Derby*.

These are amazing (well, one is amazing) PlayStation games, full of lighting effects and extreme polygon counts, things the Saturn supposedly couldn't handle as well as the PS. Up until seeing *Wipeout* in motion, I couldn't believe Sega was releasing these two

titles. *Wipeout* Saturn is an amazing feat, nearly surpassing the original version in every way. One down, one to go. Now *Destruction Derby* is nearing completion. *DD* never had much to offer in the realm of gameplay, but it was a cool game for its time when

the PS was just a wee-child.

The SS *Destruction Derby* is currently about 80% ready and so far it's, well, it's *DD* with some clipping problems, pop-up, and no transparencies. Although the forces that brought us *Wipeout* are obviously not at work here, we've been assured these problems are being addressed, save the transparencies, which just can't be.

If Sega wants to experience the same success they undoubtedly will with *Wipeout*, they've got their work cut out for them. But hey, I've seen bigger miracles. *Fight for Life* came out...



HEY, THOSE ARE THE PS OPTIONS! BUT THAT'S A GOOD THING.

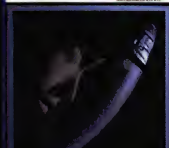




SATURN PREVIEWS
Return Fire, the ultimate war game, scored a direct hit on the PlayStation and 3DO, and is now nearing completion for the Saturn! Classical tunes like *Flight of the Bumblebee* drive the action home. Blast away this summer!

Return Fire

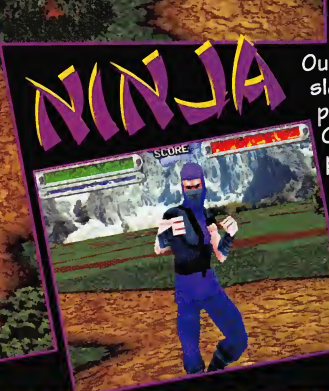
HARD Boiled



CRYO

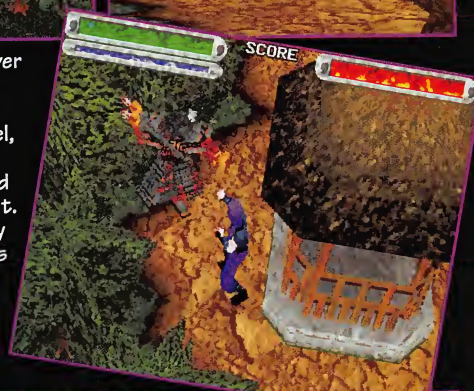
Androids have feelings too. Perhaps none more so than "Nixon," the hero of the Hard Boiled comic book series from Dark Horse Comics, Inc. Nixon feels betrayed because he was programmed to think he was a normal human tax collector, but found out by accident that he's actually a vicious mechanical assassin working for an evil megalomaniac. Now Nixon's out for revenge, gunning for the boss with high-speed flying cars and high-powered weapons galore.

Take on the role of Nixon in GTE Entertainment's new real-time, 3D action-oriented title for the PC, Playstation and Saturn. Hard Boiled, slated for release in October, will bring Frank Miller's comic classic to life.



NINJA

Our friends at Core must never sleep! Their latest work in progress takes the Ninja Golden theme to a new level, placing fast-paced Ninja action into a fully-rendered and T-mapped environment. These shots are way early and some of the graphics are not final. NINJA is sure to be a hot title. Core's street fighting game is up next month!



NIGHTWARRIORS STRATEGY GUIDE PREVIEW!

Here's a glimpse of our upcoming NightWarriors Strategy guide. Even if you've had the incredible NW for a while, we think our guide will enlighten you on aspects of the game you never even knew existed. Note that the following pages only represent an idea of the final layout! Look for the GameFan NightWarriors strategy guide this Summer! Pick it up!



DEMITRI The Vampire

• Story •

Ominous clouds of ill-omen obscure the castle. Pale moonlight shines forth into Lord Maximov's inner chamber... He is awake! "The day of battle is soon to come..." muses the Romanian noble, "After a century of waiting, there are finally foes worth fighting!" With an evil grin, Demitri rises to his feet. After a hundred years of slumber, Demitri seeks to make "Prince of Darkness" the most feared name in the netherworld once again.

• Profile •

Race: Vampire

Full Name: Demitri Maximov

Country of Origin: Romania

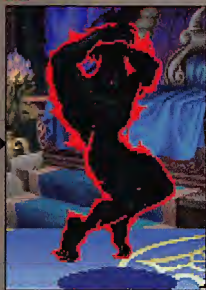
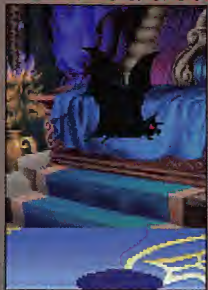
Date of Birth: 1483

Height: 179cm

Weight: 101kg

• CHARACTER POSES

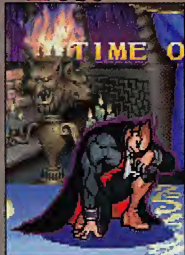
• Introduction



• Win Poses



• Lose



• Draw



• Burned



• Shocked



• Tripped



• Suicide



• Stunned



• Pursued



• Dizzy Icon



• Cursed



• Ball



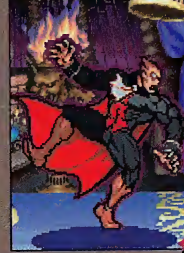
• Stabbed



• Dashing



• Missed!



• Sliced



• Character Colors

Dark	Weak Punch	Medium Punch	Strong Punch
Start	Weak Kick	Medium Kick	Strong Kick



• Win Quotes

Your blood is even weaker than you! I will not let it stain my lips!

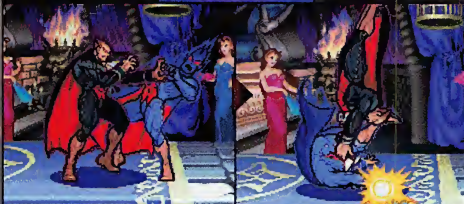
Your pathetic attempts to defeat me are truly laughable!


You fought nobly and were nobly beaten!


Fool! There can be only one true lord of the night!

•THROWS

DEMITRI


Bat Dive		
n/a 1	→+Med. or Str. P	n/a 16
		

Demon Fly		
n/a 1	↑+Med. or Str. P in air	n/a 18
		


Negative Stolen		
n/a 1	360°+ P	n/a 22
		


•GUARD REVERSALS

Demon Cradle Guard Reversal		
n/a 1	→↓↘+ P during block	n/a 18
		

ES Demon Cradle Guard Reversal		
n/a 7	→↓↘+ PP during block	n/a 5x7
		

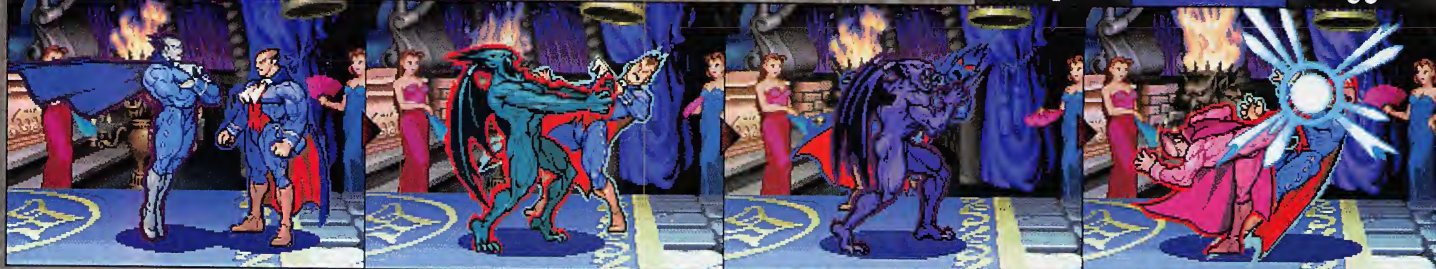
•PURSUIT

Hell's Ride		
n/a 1	↑+K on downed foe	n/a 8
		

ES Hell's Ride		
n/a 6	↑+KK on downed foe	n/a 8+2x4+4
		

•EX SPECIALS

Midnight Pleasure

X 4	↓→↘+ pp	X 35
		

Demon Blast

X 31	↓→↘+ KK	AB 3x31
		

• WINNING STRATEGIES

• Backdash into Cradle



Surprise the enemy by doing a Demon Cradle in a back-dash. The Demon Cradle will travel forward at an angle, like the normal Dash Demon Cradle.

• If the opponent blocks a jump-in...



If the enemy blocks your jumping short...

...land and do a Midnight Pleasure. You have a huge chance the enemy'll eat it. Or...

• Blocked Combo into Pleasure



If the opponent blocks a low Chain Combo, do not continue it! This will leave you open to a Guard Reversal. Instead, try a Midnight Pleasure. They won't be expecting it!

• Air Counter

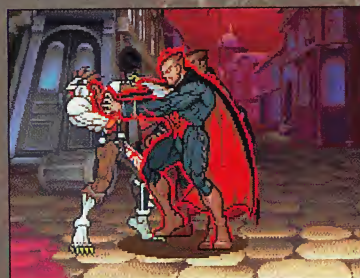


Demitri's standing Medium Kick is a superb air counter.

• Dash into...



Demitri can surprise his opponent by "coming out" of his dash with unblockable attacks such as...



...a throw...

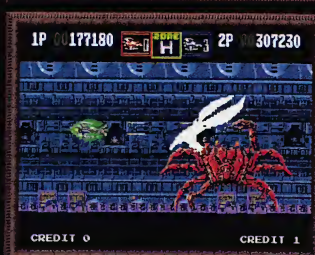
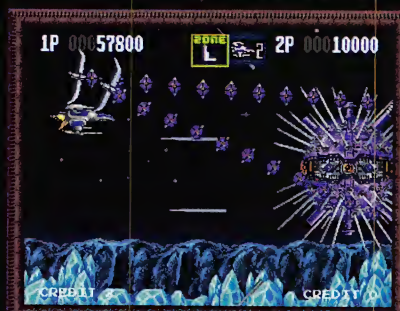
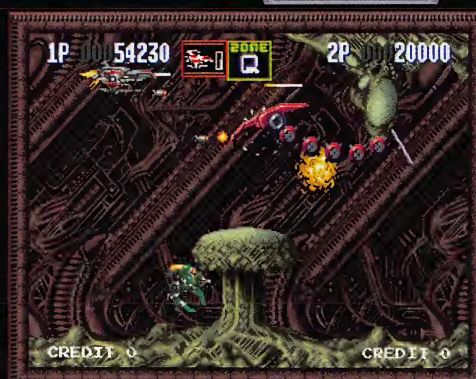
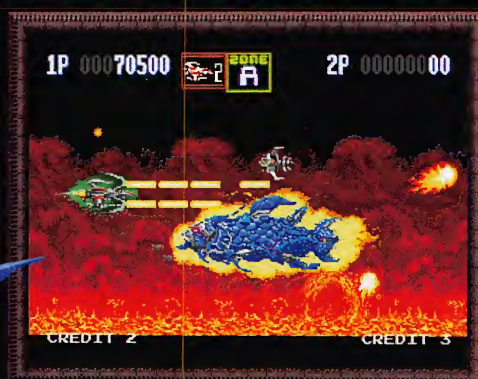


...the Negative Stolen...



...or the Midnight Pleasure.

DARIUS II



R REVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - TAITO

PUBLISHER - SEGA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - HARD

AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN



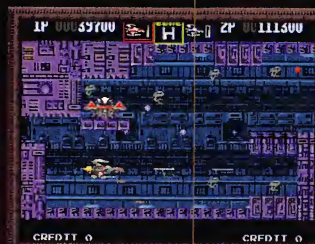
TAKUHI


I always wanted a thing called *Tuna SASHIMI!*

We'll get the obvious part out of the way first; *Darius II* is a perfect arcade port, with the same not-so-cutting-edge-now-that-it's-the-'90s coin-op graphics, and it shows. But you don't play *Darius* games for the graphics. You play 'em for the challenge, the intensity, and those little beads of cold sweat that dribble down from your armpit, no matter *how* high the air conditioning is. If that's what you look for in your shooters (and it should be), *Darius II* won't disappoint.

D2 has a lot of really cool things going for it, like the way Emilio Estevez really puts that extra oomph into his acting. Ha! Did you get that one? Okay, it's late and I'm tired and I can no longer separate the bad puns from the good ones. But, anyway, about *Darius II*. It actually has one of the coolest features I've ever seen in an arcade translation; if you remember the coin-op, it was one of those old two-screen deals that so amazed us near the turn of the decade. Those have always made hard translations, 'cause companies either need to letter-box the hell out of 'em or have it fill the screen and risk dooming the players to constantly being killed by enemies they can't even see. Taito has the solution: with the L and R buttons, you can smoothly scale the screen in and out, literally doubling the range of your vision, at any time you want. This also gives you a great excuse when you die in a 2-player game, 'cause you can always claim that the other players' scaling "made me disoriented." Used that one a few times myself, actually.

Anyway, I'm not one of those freaks who have a zealot-like love of the classics ("Shooters have been going downhill since *Defender!* Blah blah blah!"), but I know fine craftsmanship when I see it, and the *Darius* series has never had any shortage of that. *Darius II* may not have much gloss, but it has plenty of meat for those who have played *Darius Gaiden* to death. -Takuhi





BOLBOX



**PRINCESS
JEAN**



**PENGUIN
BROS.**



**CAPTAIN
ROCK**



**RAPTOR
RAPTOR**

When *Motor Toon Grand Prix* was released shortly after the PlayStation's launch, a new standard was set in the "cutesy-racing" genre, if such a term can even be used. The courses were truly remarkable, offering an alternative to *Ridge Racer* (a one-course meal) in terms of their sheer number, length, and gouraud-shaded beauty. *MTGP* also brought along character design done by Susumu Matsushita, one of the few artists whose work makes a particularly natural-looking transition to 3D models. Unfortunately, *Motor Toon* was only a sleeper hit in America—whenever I would bring up the acronym *MTGP* in a conversation, I would receive a blank look at first and then the response, "You mean *MK3*?" If the sequel, another Bandit creation, gets the same ho-hum reaction from the majority of PlayStation owners, then we truly are the nation of boors Nana always rambled about.

After viewing one of the most insane intros I've seen in a while, you'll get to witness the splendor of the new *MTGP*: the number of polygons and general level of detail on the courses makes the first game look sparse by comparison. Each course is crammed with fully animating backgrounds and

Motor Toon GRAND PRIX 2

**R
REVIEW**



DEVELOPER - BANDIT

PUBLISHER - SCE

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED

AVAILABLE NOW JPN/SDON U.S.



Motor Toon GRAND PRIX 2

TOON VILLAGE

Midnight Town Grand Prix



TOON ISLAND 2

Southern Island Grand Prix



pieces of track, not to mention the trademark Motor Toon gouraud-shading found all over the place. While there's still a fair amount of pop-up in the distance, most of the time you're eyes aren't even completely focused that far ahead: there's just too damn much to see in the way



of scenery. Textures don't just magically "appear" either: MTGP2 implements software mip-mapping that increases the resolution as the texture is scaled in. It's not N64 quality, obviously, but it beats having none at all.

Besides the familiar characters like Captain Rock and Princess Jean, MTGP2 has





● CRAZY COASTER

Sky Road Grand Prix



three new characters that you can play as once you beat the game on Easy. There's Ching Tong Shang, a mad scientist in a gruesome green auto; Vanity, a bad girl who straddles a chopper; and Billy the Tough, a buff train engineer at home in his retro choo-choo. Thankfully there are no more sequences where your character can actually run around the track sans vehicle like in Part 1: the lightning headbob action that was going on there gave me a brain clot just watching it.

The control in MTGP2 is also improved over its predecessor. Princess Jean and Billy have the tightest handling, but overall the cars seem

to just control much better in relation to the track: for instance, gone is the problem of spinning around and facing the other direction many times when you'd collide with an obstacle. And like the first

Motor Toon, driving using the NeGcon (once you get used to it) is a much smoother experience than the d-pad. The controls stay pretty much the same as in the first one too, allowing you to accelerate, reverse, brake, and change camera angles. This time around though, you can run over coins which let you pick from a cycling series of items like high-jump boots, mines, and rockets: just tap Circle to use.



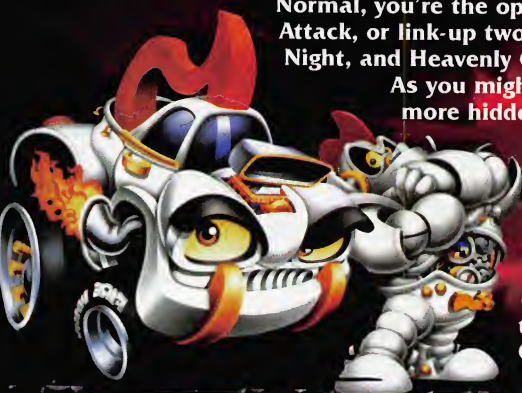
Motor Toon Grand Prix 2

HAUNTED CASTLE

Dragon Mountain Grand Prix



The five courses in the main game are Toon Village, Toon Island II, Crazy Coaster, the infamous Gulliver House II (which actually resembles Gulliver House I really closely), and my personal favorite, the Haunted Castle. After beating the game on Normal, you're the option of choosing to race five more tracks in the Single Race, Free Run, Time Attack, or link-up two-player mode. These are Snow Village, Night Island, Galaxy Coaster, Gulliver House II, and Heavenly Castle.



As you might have guessed, beating the game on every difficulty setting unveils more and more hidden features. Sure, you eventually get the omake (bonus) mode, but the coolest are the hidden bonus games revealed after beating the hard difficulties. Submarine-X is basically 3D Battleship; MT Tank Combat is a first-person search-and-destroy game using tanks fashioned after the characters' vehicles; and Motor Toon Grand Prix R is a race using either an F1 or Daytona-style car. The beauty of the last two is that both run at 60fps... sweetness. There is no excuse to overlook this title. Sure, the music is something which can only be described as "fruitastic," but that should never be reason enough to make a yuckface, especially when that game is something like Motor Toon Grand Prix 2. -Evil Lights



GOODIES!! Motor Toon 2's Goodies are a big part of what makes it such a great CD. Beat Easy mode- get three new characters, Normal-five spectacular new courses, Hard-play MT Tank! (it's better than most Jag games), Professional-play Submarine X (Polygon Battleship), Expert and beyond?, a 60fps F1 racer and who knows what else.

BONUS TRACKS! (PART 1)



SNOW VILLAGE



NIGHT ISLAND



GALAXY COASTER



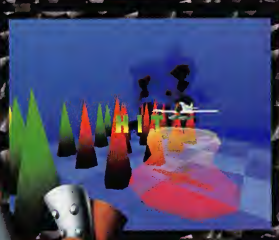
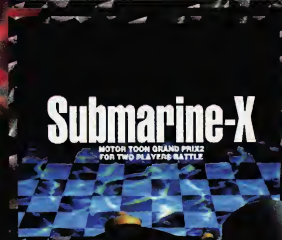
GULLIVER NIGHT



HEAVENLY CASTLE



BONUS GAMES!



NEW CHARACTERS!



BILLY THE TOUGH



CHING TONG SHANG



VANITY



TREASURE HUNTER G



This is it... SQUARE's last Super Famicom game. *Treasure Hunter G* marks the end of an era, and it's probably the last SQUARE RPG anyone'll play for 6 months or so. Of course, the SQUARE name doesn't really mean as much as it used to, especially since three of their last four releases, *Bahamut Lagoon*, *Gun Hazard*, and *Ludra*, were pretty weak. But thankfully, SQUARE put all their effort into this one last game, a title worthy of being SQUARE's final farewell to 16-bit.

The big concept in *Treasure Hunter G* was originally rendered characters... an idea that probably looked good on paper, but in SNES resolution, you can barely even tell. Luckily, *THG* has a lot more going for it than that; specifically a great battle system, a fun quest, and an incredible soundtrack.

You play as the brothers Red Gamlius and Blue Gamlius (as in: "Treasure Hunter Gamlius"), sons of Brown Gamlius and his late wife (let's call her Mauve Gamlius). Brown Gamlius is a treasure hunter who is thought to be insane by the rest of the villagers—he's always ranting about metal birds and bridges to other worlds. He disappears for months on end without any explanation, and hero Red decides that the only way to protect emotionally fragile Blue is to move in with their uncle Silver.

But it turns out their father may have been onto something huge, as the kids (accompanied by the mysterious girl Rain, and her violin-playing monkey Ponga) learn of the impending doom of their world, a puzzle only their missing father can solve. In order to find him, they must go on a transcontinental hunt for the OPARTS (Out-of-Place ARTifactS) he was searching for, in hopes of finding him or, if necessary, finishing his work.

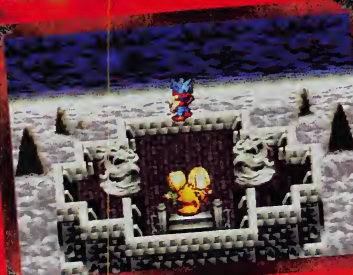
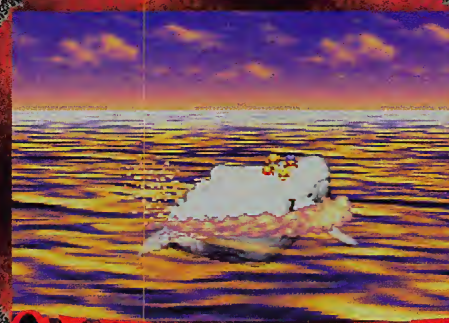
Though *Treasure Hunter G* is credited to Sting, a small

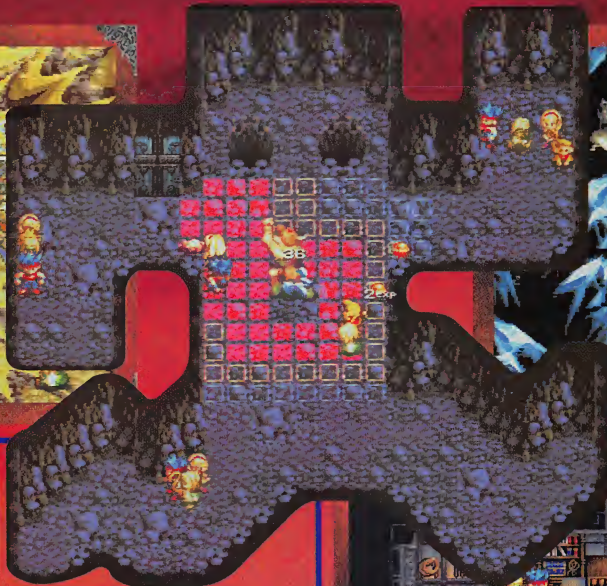
company I've never heard of, everything about it screams "SQUARE." The graphics are beautiful (they're really not well-represented in this layout at all... A dysfunctional piece of grabbing equipment destroyed a lot of the colors), the music is incredible, and the events are cool, but a tad cliché (as in all SQUARE games). On the plus side, though, is the battle system. I'm getting really sick of generic, over-used RPG battles, and *Treasure Hunter G*'s are definitely a breath of fresh air.

First of all, the battles occur in set locations, and after you fight one, you never fight it again, even if you leave the room and come back. As a result, you're free to explore dungeons to your heart's content. Though the graphics are kind of weak (and I'm not sure if I like the concept of LOADING time in my cartridge games!), the battles are unusually heavy on the strategic aspects, as if each one was a little puzzle game. You can just rush all the enemies and try to bash 'em to pieces, of course, but if you try to use more advanced strategies (knowing when to let the enemies come to you, knowing which enemies to kill first, knowing the pros and cons of each weapon, etc.) the battles can be a lot more interesting.

I'm not even going to attempt the standard "let's just hope someone ports this over here" closing sentence, 'cause let's face it, it's not going to happen. And unfortunately for import buyers, *Treasure Hunter G* will require some (but not much) Japanese knowledge. Still, I thought it would be important to show you all this final SQUARE epic, not only to commemorate their years of quality Super Famicom games, but as a possible hint of things to come. For if Japanese consumers recognize the high quality of this title, it's a sure bet we'll be seeing more of the *Treasure Hunter* series in the future.

-Takuhi

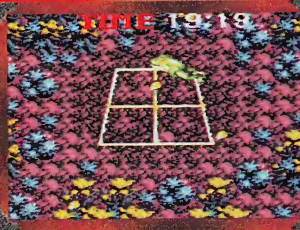




Those folks at Sting have some big problems. If I can sum it up in a word: frogs. Frogs are everywhere in *THG*. They're the first items you'll find, by beating down the bushes and cutting the weeds in town. They become a valuable unit of currency early in the game, when frog trafficking between towns can be a valuable source of funds. Certain frogs can be unleashed in battle to attack your enemies, and all frogs can be tossed at your foes for a quick damage point or two. Frogs, or rather, the oil extracted from frogs, is the basis for all medicines and potions in *THG*'s world. If you need some medicine made, say, to cure your whale friend, you'll need to find the right frog.

It gets worse. Later in the game, you'll come to the frog casino, a shining monument to the depravity of *THG*'s creators. Here, frogs are not only what you bet with, but the themes of all the games, and the prizes as well. Win one game, for example, and you can get the "Butsubutsu Boots," (Butsubutsu is the Japanese word for the sensation of warts emerging... and I swear I'm not making that up.) When worn, this otherwise useless item covers your feet with warts, something that your equipment screen assures you "feels good." Talk to the statue in the middle of the casino, and enter the right password (Kerokero, the sound frogs make in Japanese), to get into the dark underground casino for the real high rollers.

I could go on for pages upon pages. It really is sick.



R REVIEW



SUPER FAMICOM

DEVELOPER - STING

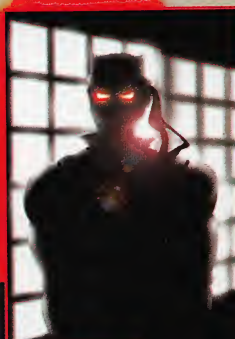
PUBLISHER - SQUARE

FORMAT - 24 MEG CART.

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - MODERATE

AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN



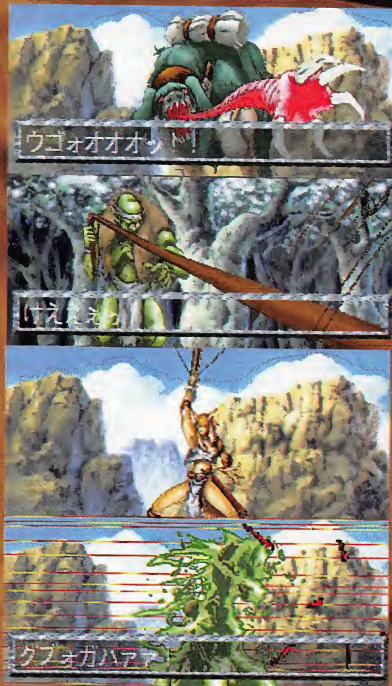


DEVELOPER - MICROCABIN
PUBLISHER - SEGA
FORMAT - CD
OF PLAYERS - 1
DIFFICULTY - BEGINNER
AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN

R
REVIEW

Welcome to GameFan's first (and hopefully last) "Lame Saturn RPG Conversions" section. On the top, we have *Sword & Sorcery*, a great 3DO game that had the misfortune of being released on a system whose time had long since passed. On the bottom, *Feda*, a pretty good 1994 Super Famicom strategy game from (some of) the makers of *Shining Force*. Now, after much (alleged) retooling, remixing, and upgrading, they're out for the Japanese Saturn, and we can all see the fruits of a combined year-and-a-half of labor: FMV intros.

Microcabin clearly spent a ton of money on the Saturn release of *Sword*



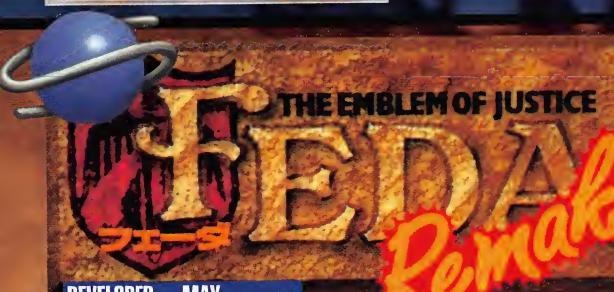
Feel the power of 32-bit!
(or maybe not...)





& *Sorcery*, as the brief animated intro has very high video quality, and the game's characters are played by the #1 (Megumi Hiyashibara herself, as "Lucienne") and #2 female voice actors working today in Japan. But, with the exception of some nice FMV and lots of voice, *Sword & Sorcery* is in every way equal to or worse than the 3DO version. The textures have been nicely-recolored to give the game an older and less gaudy feel, but it's just as framey, has even more pop-up, and the one new camera angle is not only useless, but it practically grinds the game to a halt. It's as if the game's running on a poor 3DO emulator.

You can tell how much they cared about the quality of the game itself by the few changes they did make: The Saturn can't do hardware light-sourcing or transparencies in a 3D environment, so Microcabin would have had to completely reprogram a lot of things to get the same effects, or use the Saturn's more advanced capabilities to create new ones. But instead of doing either, they just replaced what they had to (spell effects) with cheap-looking scaling sprites, and cut everything else (clouds in the overworld, for example, are just gone).



DEVELOPER - MAX

PUBLISHER - YANOMAN

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1

DIFFICULTY - CHALLENGING

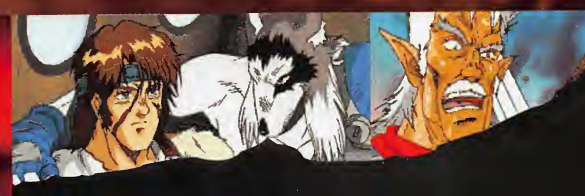
AVAILABLE - NOW-JAPAN

R
REVIEW

MAX, creators of *Feda*, tried do a bit more with their game. It has an okay FMV intro, lots of voice, new hand-drawn intermissions, nicely redrawn battle scenes, and a couple of new characters. That's more changes than Microcabin made in *Sword & Sorcery*, but at least that was a 32-bit game to begin with! *Feda*'s an old Super Famicom title, and it shows.

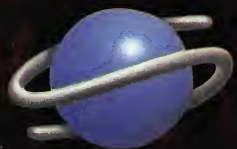
The map scenes are sad... They weren't even good by Super Famicom standards! The main world maps have been redone, but the actually strategy maps, where you'll be spending most of your time, are colorless and cheap-looking. And the music... Gaacckkk... Did they actually record Super Famicom music and stream it onto a CD? WHY!? They could have at least used music from the arranged music CD that was released after the SF *Feda*.

Both of these games are (or should I say were) fundamentally pretty good. *Sword & Sorcery* has a really cool quest and great music, and *Feda* is long (though repetitive) and has a ton of characters (and some exceptional artwork). But I'm not in the habit of paying import fees to play old Super Famicom and 3DO games on my Saturn, and I doubt anyone else is either. Microcabin and MAX should take a lesson from the upcoming Saturn version of *Lunar*, and learn exactly what a "remix" is all about. -Takuhi





R
REVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - BANDAI

PUBLISHER - BANDAI

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADVANCED

AVAILABLE - NOW JAPAN



DRAGON BALL Z LEGENDS



The ever-popular *Dragon Ball Z* series has finally made it to 32-bit! Yeah, yeah, I know *Ultimate Battle 22* was released a while ago, but it was so bad I don't consider it to be part of the series. I know what all you non-*Dragon Ball* fans are thinking... just why is the *DB* series so popular? One has to but watch a single hyper-kinetic, ultra-destructive, insane, hundred-mile-an-hour battle from the series to be hooked for life. Unfortunately, no *DB* game yet has recreated the fury of the average *Dragon Ball* battle... until now. Furthermore, nearly all of the characters from the series have made it into the game, hence the name *Dragon Ball Z "Legends."*

There are two game modes: story and versus. In the story mode you'll fight rivals like Vegeta, Freeza, Cell, Majin Boo... the list goes on and on. In versus mode you'll only have four characters to choose from, but as you progress in story mode, all of the defeated enemies will be playable ala *Guardian Heroes*.

During the battles, there's a power balance meter that determines who has the initiative to whip out an all-destroying special attack. From Goku's Super Kamehameha to Gotenks' Super Kamikaze Ghost Attack, it's a real rush to watch the *DBZ* characters annihilate each other into oblivion.

At first, the play mechanics are a bit hard to get used to. However, if you're a hard-core *DBZ* fanatic such as I, your determination will become most useful at figuring them out. Once you get the hang of how to link the rush combos, everything else should be a piece of cake.

As you can see, the graphics are phenomenal, with beautiful light-sourcing and transparency effects on the PlayStation, and a higher-resolution ground texture on the Saturn. The music gets a tad repetitive, but hey... the anime recycled the same tunes for about 8 years, so go figure.

In closing I must say that this game should not be missed by any *DBZ* fan, nor even the slight enthusiast.

-Waka

**ACHIEVE THE
POWER
BALANCE IN
BATTLE, THEN
FINISH THEM
WITH A
SUPER MOVE!**

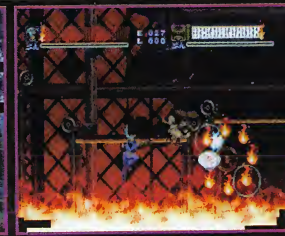
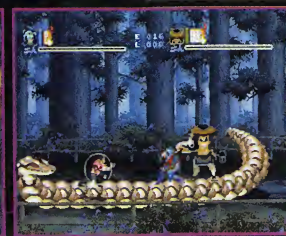
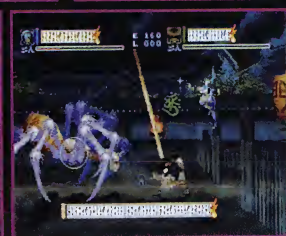
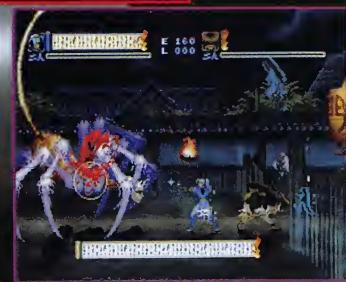


E.S. Storm's IMPORT RETURN

Reviews



PSYCHIC KILLER Time Warner Japan's new side scrolling "psychic" action game, *Shinrei Jusatsu Taromaru*, has you attacking enemies by throwing auto locking psychic power! The main characters are Taromaru who was born with magical powers, and his friend Enkai, a monk. Their combined powers, called "Jusatsu" concentrate anger into the hand where it shoots out, rendering enemies helpless (I guess that makes them psychic friends). The auto lock aims this power at the closest enemy. The levels are constructed of polygonal buildings with multi-layers of gorgeous parallax in the background. *Mystic Defender* meets *Shinobi* is what it looks like to me, which is why I'm all over this game! I'll have lots more coverage in the months ahead. The game releases in Japan this August.



TechnoSoft is releasing the entire *Thunder Force* series on two Saturn CDs (sold separately called *TF Gold Packs*) this August. They are also doing 2 new Saturn games, perhaps a new *Thunder Force* and the game pictured here, *Hyper Duel*. The arcade *TF 3* will be on GP disc 2!

Rather than attempt another port, *Toshinden URA* pronounced (YOU ARE A) is being developed exclusively for the Saturn! One of the two new characters is named Ripper and the game runs in the same high-res mode as *VF2*!



MEET REALA!

Reala is Nights' rival. Like Nights he is a first level Nightmaren and has the power to actually create worlds. Reala's world, the evil-looking red one pictured, is most likely the game's 7th stage. Reala has all of Nights' abilities plus a special drill dash. Reala may be the last boss before Wiseman, the game's main bad guy.



STREET FIGHTER ZERO 2!

Here are the first Saturn shots of *Zero 2*, supposedly scheduled for release in Japan July 15th. Capcom's targeting a fourth quarter release for *Alpha 2* here in the states.



GAMEFAN

SPORTS Previews



Chip
I'm all ya' need

Chip here... Our GF Sports review section is currently under construction as we bring in a new staff sports writer (Cal went back to school) and make some cool changes.

Me and ??? (or is that ??? and I?) will have all of this month's reviews in next month's GFS.

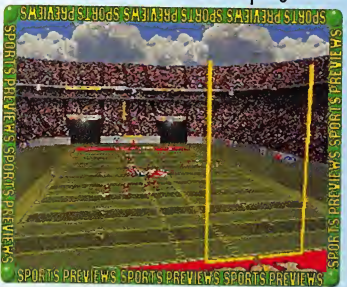
Just between me and you *V-Tennis* is the game! *TP '97* is the ultimate baseball game and *Big Hurt* is a class act, but *V-Tennis* is something special and my pick this month.



Scheduled for a fall '96 release, *Andretti Racing '97*, shown above, feature Indy and stock cars, and 16 different tracks, including three licensed street tracks and one licensed oval—plus racing tips from the Andretti family. The crashes are said to be spectacular!



Expect this to top even *FIFA '95*... *FIFA '96* has over 3,800 real players, twelve international leagues, even real jersey numbers on fully rendered players!!! What I'm anxious to hear are the "worldwide authentic chants." I can't wait for this one!

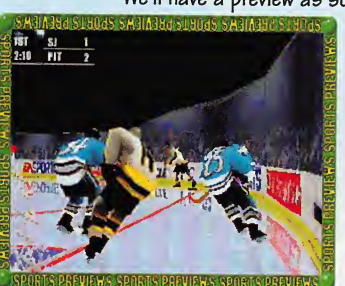


After a big one year delay and just in time for the new season (I feel San Diego goin' all the way again), EA's *Madden '97* is close to complete. EA lets it fly this fall! But JM hates to fly... they'll have to let it ride.

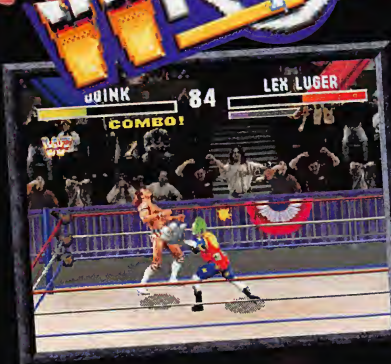
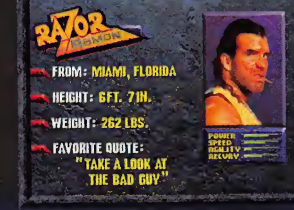
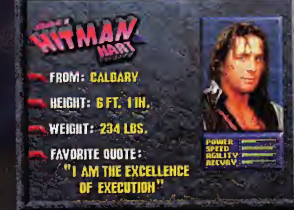
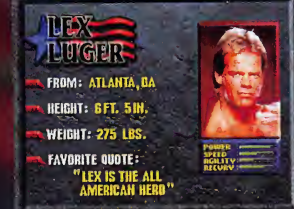
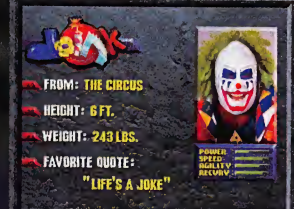
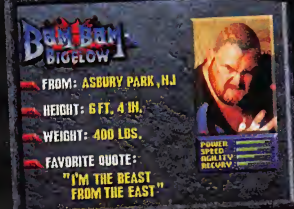
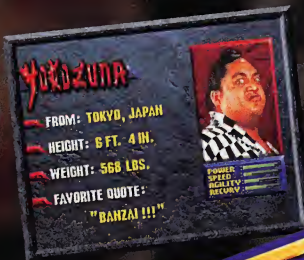


Following *NFL GameDay*, the PS' best-selling title, comes *NCAA GameBreaker*, pictured above. *NCAA* features all the teams and conferences.

The four screens, below, are of EA's amazing (and I do mean amazing) *NHL '97*. We'll have a preview as soon as we can get a disc.



BANZAI!!



The arcade wrestler against which all future wrestling games will be measured has finally made its way onto the Saturn, and you don't even have to pay-per-view. Pay just once and it's yours forever! Feel the pounding cheeks of Yokozuna, wield wild demons as The Undertaker, experience the total lame-ness that is Razor Ramon. It's all here in hyper-exaggerated fast-paced fighting form. That's right! You won't find any button-mashing boredom here as you have in almost every preceding wrestling title, but instead, fighting game controls that produce radical special moves. Just imagine the crazy antics of the WWF pumped up about ten-fold, and that pretty much paints the WWF picture.

Graphically, the game moves along at a frantic pace, has excellently-animated, digitized characters and the overall look and feel of a high-bred coin-op. Audibly, the music matches the action pound for pound with wild tunes and blistering sound effects. Of course, all the participants' trademark moves are here, along with commentary from the crazed Vince McMahon.

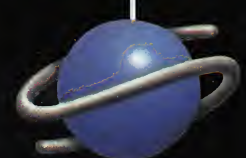
Even if you've never played a wrestling game before or dare I say, hate professional wrestling, you gotta love this game for its sheer adrenaline rush. You know, I used to despise wrestling when they tried to pass it off as "real." But since they've come clean and turned it into a violent soap-opera I kinda like it. Either way, this is the wrestling game to beat all wrestling games.

The Saturn version is every bit as good as the PS, with a little less loading being the only real difference. It's a shame WWF Saturn didn't come out simultaneously with the PS version while the coin-op was still hot. Nevertheless, with the monster following the WWF has nationwide I'm quite sure Acclaim has nothing to worry about. I bought one.



REST IN PEACE!!

GAMEFAN SPORTS REVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER	MIDWAY
PUBLISHER	ACCLAIM
FORMAT	CD
# OF PLAYERS	1-2
DIFFICULTY	ADJUSTABLE
AVAILABLE	NOW



E. STORM
 Pro Wrestling... The new Olympic sport



NBA ACTION



GAMEEAN
SPORTS



REVIEW



SEGA SATURN
DEVELOPER - SEGA
PUBLISHER - SEGA
FORMAT - CD
OF PLAYERS - 1-8 (TAP)
DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE
AVAILABLE - JUNE



CAL CAVALIER
GAMEPLAY IS EVERYTHING



Game Options

GAME OPTIONS		
QUARTER LENGTH	5	RATIGUE ON
SKILL LEVEL	MED	AUTO SUBS OFF
REFEREES	MED	AUTO TIMEOUTS OFF
INJURIES	ON	MUSIC OFF
ROLE PLAYING	OFF	SOUND EFFECTS ON
USER RECORDS	OFF	COMMENTARY ON
AUTO REPLAY	ON	STAT DISPLAY ON

League Leaders

	PTS	REB	AST	STL	BLK
1. S. Webb	MIN	24	236	242	534
2. M. Price	WAS	40	146	162	014
3. D. Harris	BOS	62	247	306	899
4. D. Miller	IND	01	308	427	697
5. M. Rogers	CHA	70	180	100	289
6. M. Abdul-Rauf	SEA	72	120	105	245
7. K. Armstrong	GS	10	201	437	686
8. J. Horvath	UTA	11	204	224	682



When I first heard about *NBA Action*, Sega Sports' first basketball game for the Saturn, I had very high expectations. With titles like *World Series Baseball*, *Pebble Beach Golf Links* and *Worldwide Soccer* to their credit, Sega Sports has built a reputation for producing great games.

It's the 3D graphics that prevent *NBA Action* from being a great basketball game. The character animation is a bit stiff and quasi-realistic and a step that should move you 3 or 4 feet winds up looking more like 8-10. It's as if an alien tractor beam was dragging you along the court. Additionally, polygons frequently drop-out on replays and the textures look slightly muddy when viewed up close. Of course, these traits are inherent of many first gen polygon based sports games. For the most part, the graphics are good. If I had seen *NBA Action* back in the 16-bit days I would have been shocked. In the sports world, gameplay is king.

What *NBA Action* lacks in graphics, it makes up for in gameplay. You can call offensive and defensive plays on-the-fly, perform intentional fouls, call a double team, box out for the rebound and call for an offensive pick if you want a clear path to the hoop. The list goes on and on. It's this flexibility in play that makes *NBA Action* the thinking man's basketball game.

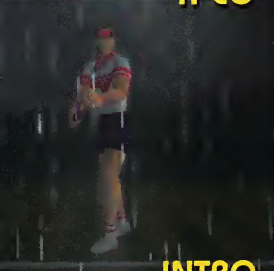
I recommend *NBA Action* to those who place a higher emphasis on gameplay than on graphics. *NBA Action* is a good looking, great playing basketball game with solid playability, excellent control and fair graphics. - Cal



ALL OF THE NBA
TEAMS, HERE FOR YOU!



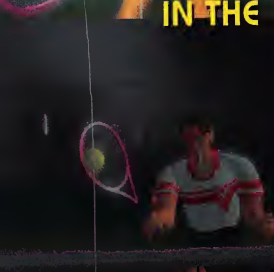
A CG



INTRO



IN THE



RAIN!?



INDOOR



GAMEFAN SPORTS



V-Tennis



Tennis games are among my favorite in all of sports gaming. They're a gas with two players and the simple, back-and-forth, timing-oriented gameplay is totally addictive, given the game has the graphics and playability to back it up. Problem was, pre-32-bit there just weren't very many good tennis games out there. That's all beginning to change now, especially on the Sony side. The PS' powerful 3D capabilities make it the perfect tennis machine.

As I write this, the French Open has just concluded with Graf winning a heart breaker over Sanchez, and HBO is gearing up for Wimbledon, one of my favorite sporting events of the year. So, it's the perfect time for some *V-Tennis*, Tonkin House's (via Acclaim) most glorious tennis game.

I look for three things when reviewing a tennis game, control, animation, and realistic speed. If any of these are off even a little, especially the control, it pretty much spells doom. All three elements are just right in *VT*. Basically, you *are* playing tennis. The polygonal graphics are done frighteningly well, with smooth animation, split second reaction and realistic player movement. Additionally, *VT* allows you to edit perspectives to a point previously unheard of. Take any of the nine pre-sets and modify it to your liking. This helps on both sides of the net making side changes easy to adjust to, maintaining balance throughout a match. In most tennis games you're hosed when on the far side of the court—not so in *VT*. There are of course four surfaces to play on—hard, clay, grass, and carpet—and each changes the gameplay physics accordingly. *VT* also has good music, a rarity among sports games. Basically, *V-Tennis* has zero faults except for the lack of actual stars, which is the last thing on your mind when you're charging the net.



KILAUEA



REPLAY

REVIEW



DEVELOPER - TONKIN HOUSE

PUBLISHER - ACCLAIM

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - JUNE



CHIP
GAME, SET AND MATCH,
V-TENNIS IS NUMBER ONE!



FIJI

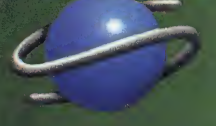




GAMEFAN SPORTS



PREVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - SOA

PUBLISHER - SOA

FORMAT - CD

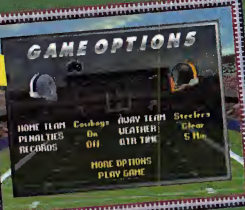
OF PLAYERS - 1-8 (W/TAP)

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE NOVEMBER



CHIP
"SSSSS!!!!"



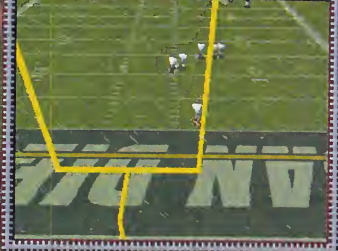
Sega Sports' long-awaited Prime Time NFL

'96 is finally beginning to take shape. Featuring the ever-flamboyant Deion "Prime Time" Sanders, this elusive Saturn football game was supposed to arrive last Christmas (similar to the way Madden '96 for the PlayStation was supposed to be available in time for the holidays before it got delayed a year), but Sega has taken the time to make sure Prime Time is just right. And believe me the game appears very exciting.

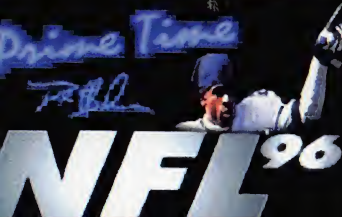


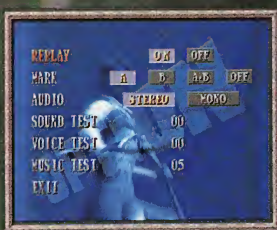
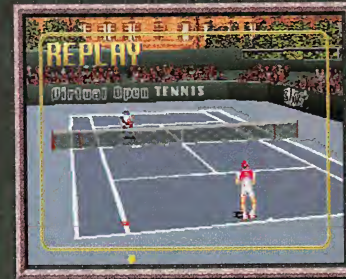
Right now the 3D scrolling is a little bit on the choppy side, but Sega assures us that the game's graphics will improve as it nears completion. Judging from what I've seen and heard, NFL '96 could be a major contender in the 32-bit football race. Don't believe me? Well, consider this.

NFL '96 has all 30 NFL teams (and stadiums), real players from every team, stat tracking in all categories, multiple play perspectives, pass speed control, 6-player Multi-Tap compatibility, plus over 300 offensive and defensive plays to choose from. Due out this fall,



Sega Sports' Prime Time NFL '96 has tons of potential. If Sega puts the same magic touch on the gameplay as they say they are to the 3D, this game will be awesome.
-Chip





What's this? Two tennis games coming out in the US in the same month from the same company, one for each next-gen console, just as Wimbledon gets underway? Someone, namely Acclaim, has perfect timing. Picking up the best from the Japan is becoming commonplace with Acclaim, and I couldn't be happier. From shooters to fighters to tennis, Acclaim's lineup becomes deeper and more impressive with each passing month.

Virtual Open Tennis is an excellent acquisition. While it's not quite the game that *V-Tennis* is, it is a good tennis game loaded with hot CG and incredibly playable matches. Although only one camera angle is featured, it is ideal for play on both sides of the net. The players, who react to all six buttons, control and animate with precision and great animation. There are ten fictional (though they resemble stars from throughout the tennis world) characters to choose from for exhibition, championship, or training play.

The control in VOT is so precise it's almost too good. In fact, if I have one beef with VOT, it's the hyper touchy control. The players react so realistically (when turning, diving, etc.), it takes perfect anticipation on the ball to perform difficult shots. Once you grow accustomed it becomes second nature, but the learning curve is steep. In the end (and this is the end) VOT represents two things. One, it's a pretty good tennis game. And two, it's the only tennis game available for the Saturn. I guess that makes it the best one.



Virtual Open TENNIS

CHOOSE FROM TEN PRO TENNIS CLONES WITH THEIR OWN TRADEMARK MOVES!



CHIP
WHAT? NO STEFFI GRAF, NO GABRIELA SABATINI! WHAT KIND OF GAME IS THIS?

GAMEFAN SPORTS



REVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - IMAGINEER

PUBLISHER - ACCLAIM

FORMAT - CD

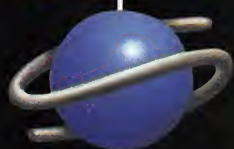
OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - JUNE



REVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - IGUANA

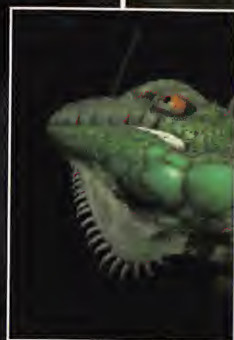
PUBLISHER - ACCLAIM

FORMAT - CD

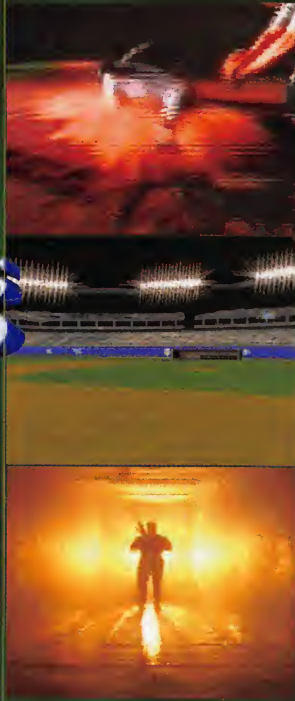
OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - JUNE



Chip, Chip? What happened to Chip?

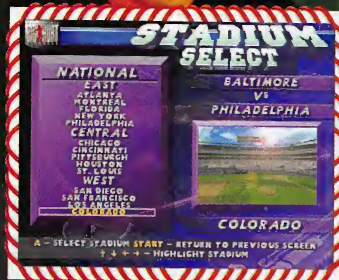


New, from the makers of *QB Club*, and the masters of the *Jam*, it's *Frank Thomas Big Hurt Baseball*. Pound for pound (Frank's a big guy) *Big Hurt* is ready to go to bat with TP '97 for the BB crown.

From the outset *Big Hurt* is a sight for sore eyes. Before you even enter a game you'll be absorbed by the amazing FMV, slick stat screens and amazing field overview, lens flare and all. From there it's on to the game. "Hot Dogs Get Yer' Red Hots"... Batting is done from a fixed position via the huge and almost overly animated batter, who just won't stop wiggling.

Fielding, however is privy to several cameras, each offering a new perspective from the crack of the bat to the diving catch. The pitching in *BH* isn't overly complex, but extremely controllable and user friendly. Throw a curve, fastball or slider (marked by assorted buttons) and steer it in, just like the big boys. The pitchers scratch and spit by the way, which you just gotta love. Graphically *BH* hits a homer with hyper-detailed fielders who remain realistic even when scaled

way out, and polygonal stadiums that rotate smoothly. Of course there are stats galore and real players, but don't look for team names; Acclaim spent that money on development. Iguana took the time to give *FTBH* just about everything except the peanuts. The boys of summer never had it so good. -Chip



Will the PlayStation take it in the 3rd period?



GAMEFAN SPORTS



PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - VIRGIN

PUBLISHER - VIRGIN

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1/TAP

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - JUNE



CRACK! You hear, as the puck soars towards the dental work, I mean goal. He shoots, he scores!

I apologize for my burst of enthusiasm there, but I love hockey. Although I've played many hockey games in the past, I have to tell you that I'm not even lying when I say this is the most advanced hockey game yet, even surpassing my favorite, *Blades of Steel* (hey, I'll take gameplay over glamor anyway).

In my opinion, *Blades'* play control was the tightest: but the boys at Virgin have managed to give this one the cup. The motion-capture 3D in *NHL* makes the characters a tad more realistic than in my beloved NES game. Everything, by the way, is 3D, from the players to the puck: once you get into the rink of

death, it's no holds barred in a three-dimensional



GAMEFAN SPORTS



PREVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - VIRGIN

PUBLISHER - VIRGIN

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1/TAP

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - JUNE



world so real you'll need to look out for the smell of flying squid.

In my childhood in Albany, I played the game at my all-boys' school during the winter (all nine months of it). I couldn't win then, and I still can't now thanks to the advanced artificial intelligence in Virgin's game (rumored to be taken directly from the brainwaves of the Infamous Austrian himself, Jacques LeBleux!).

Even though the graphics and the gameplay are amazing, what really blew me away were the sound effects. First: I've never heard a more realistic sounding puck being cracked by a stick than in this game. And the sound of blades scraping against ice? Magnificent. You can't pull the wool over a person's eyes when it comes to the sounds of the rink: they need to be sampled, not synthesized. Virgin does it right. I could swear they sampled the boos of the crowd from way back during my big game. I'll take that sound to my grave. Sure, I missed the vital shot, but I won't next time, Draven. -Chip



or will the Saturn take it in the finals?



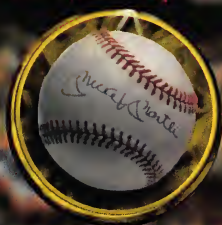
TRIPLE PLAY

VIRTUAL STADIUM™ BASEBALL

97



GAMEFAN
SPORTS



REVIEW



DEVELOPER - EA

PUBLISHER - EA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - INTERMEDIATE

AVAILABLE - JUNE



CHIP
SAAAH-WING, BATTA...

Could EA Sports' *Triple Play '97* be the best 32-bit baseball game available? It has awesome 3D graphics, instinctive control, very deep gameplay, stats to burn, a polished look and many small details that you don't usually find in a sports game. I think it's safe to say that nothing is missing.

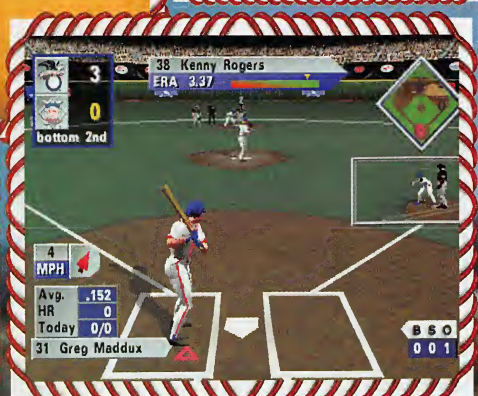
Graphically, *TP '97* delivers, priority overnight, baby. EA Sports' Virtual Stadium 3D engine (rendered players on polygon playfields) makes for one of the smoothest looking and feeling baseball games I've ever seen or played. Even scaled way up, players show only minor pixelization, a small price to pay for the multiple camera perspectives and smooth 3D scrolling.

As impressive as the graphics are,

the best part about *TP '97* is the deep gameplay and easy-to-learn control. There really isn't any of the typical baseball-sim "learning curve" control adjustment required for *TP '97*. A novice player can quickly jump in and start having fun, as the control is very logical.

While being easy to execute, the gameplay is deep enough for the enthusiast sportster as well. Take the pitch selection, for example. There are a whopping 10 different pitches to choose from in *Triple Play* ("slow" fastball, change-up, fastball, curve, screwball, slider, sinker, (excuse me) splitter, knuckleball and the pitch-out). The joystick command for the screwball and curveball are reversed depending on





whether the pitcher is left-handed or right-handed (details, details). After you release the ball, you can control the trajectory of the pitch in one of 8 directions (bottom right-hand corner, top left-hand corner, etc). Do the math, and you'll find out that 80 different pitches are at your disposal. Just like the real thing (save the tobacco)!

Batting, you can choose from 3 different stances, 5 different swings and pull the ball in 8 different directions. And base runners can slide either feet or head-first into a base. Fielders have a speed burst and can jump or dive for a ball. As you see (or read), *TP '97* has a lot of depth, but it's so easy to execute it inspires you to keep playing rather than reaching

for the manual. Not that I don't read manuals. I enjoy nothing more than a trip to the can with my favorite instruction manual!

Additionally, *Triple Play* has every player's stats, every team and stadium, and all the team rosters. You, know, stuff EA always has. They are among the kings of the genre, y'know.

Most important of all, *TP '97* is a blast to play. My cap's off to the developers. They have obviously spent many a sleepless night getting it just right.

Among fierce competition from the likes of Sony, Acclaim, and Nintendo, EA has again risen to the top.

As it stands now, it'll be a major-league miracle if *Pennant Race* beats-out EA's finest for baseball game of the year. -Chip



MLB PENNANT RACE

GAMEFAN
SPORTS



PREVIEW



DEVELOPER - SONY

PUBLISHER - SONY

FORMAT - CD

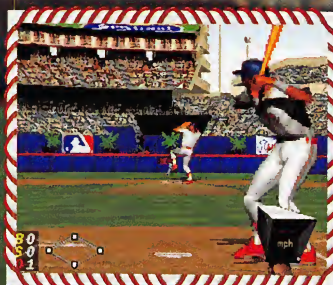
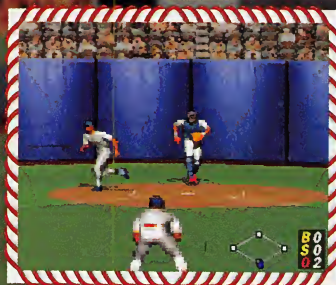
OF PLAYERS - 1-2

DIFFICULTY - ADJUSTABLE

AVAILABLE - JUNE



CHIP



The fourth sports title from Sony Computer Entertainment is close at hand, *MLB Pennant Race*. After *NFL GameDay*, *NHL Face Off* and *NBA Shoot Out*, you can be sure that you're about to receive one hot baseball game. Sony Sports games are freakin' phenomenal!

PR has all the licenses from the Major League Baseball (MLB) and Players' Association (MLBPA). That's a grand total of over 700 hundred players. Ahhh, the joys of CD. Of course, with each team comes their respective stadiums, which are fully texture-mapped and accurate down to the last detail. How about some more realism: The players show up in either their home or away uniforms, to coincide with each game! Sony has opted for motion-capped players for obvious reasons, *MLB PR* is obviously aimed at becoming a

true simulation right down to the cork in the bats. Player animations include head-first slides, diving, jumping, home run-saving catches and everything in between.

Here's the really crazy part. You already know *PR* has in-depth stats and player ratings for 700 plus players. But would you believe it has a player generator as well? You can assign your own attributes, trade players, create all-star teams, etc. Wow! Too much for us *arcade sports fans* perhaps? Well, no worries. The game has three difficulty settings, including simulation or

arcade style gameplay in addition to the Home Run Derby, Exhibition, Season, Playoffs and World Series play. Of course the graphics speak for themselves. Have a look and I'll be back next month with a play-by-play review. -Chip





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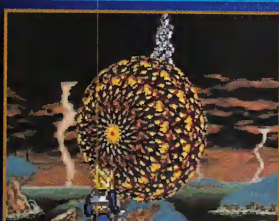
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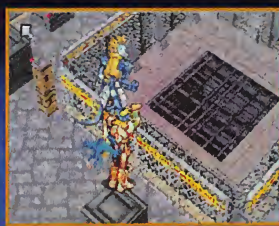
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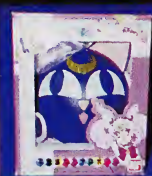
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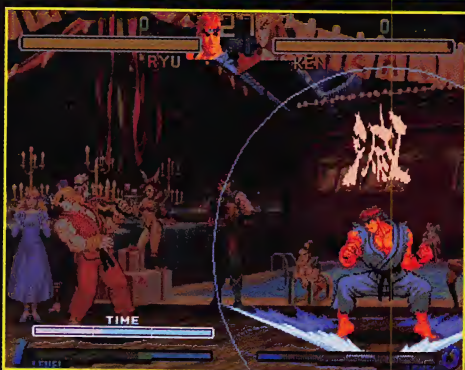


EVIL RYU CODE REVEALED!!



Remember last month's Satsui no Hado (Evil) Ryu? We apologize for not printing the code, but it was just too early to release it last month. Here, however, are the codes for Evil Ryu and Champion Dhalsim and Zangief.

Satsui no Hado Ryu: Highlight Ryu and hold Start. Move the cursor right to Adon, then press Up to move to Akuma. Then press Down to return to Adon, Left to return to Ryu, and press any button to begin the game.

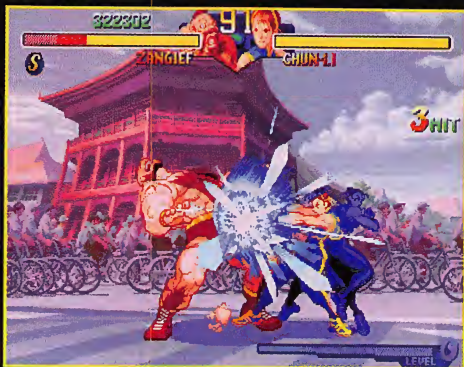


STREET FIGHTER II' DHALSIM



Highlight Dhalsim and hold Start. Press Left. Press Down. Press Right. Press Up. Now press any button to begin. SFII' Dhalsim has a Yoga Fire that travels the length of the screen, but that's about it...

STREET FIGHTER II' ZANGIEF



Highlight Zangief and hold Start. Now move the cursor to the following characters: Zangief - Sagat - Sodom - Rose - Birdie - Charlie - Dhalsim - Ryu - Adon - Chun-Li - Guy - Ken - Zangief. This is basically a clockwise revolution of the select screen. Press any button to begin. Boy oh boy! Zangief with no super bar! Now he's REALLY useless... sorry Andrew, he just is!



THIS MONTH
LAST MONTH

JAPAN'S TOP 10

TITLE

FORMAT/GENRE

RELEASE DATE

1	-	Treasure Hunter G	Square (SuperFamicom) RPG	5/24/96 Cartridge
2	1	Fire Emblem 2	Nintendo (SuperFamicom) Strategy/RPG	5/14/96 Cartridge
3	3	The People of Nono Village's Hospital	ENI (Saturn) Adventure	4/26/96 CD-ROM
4	4	Bio Hazard	Capcom (PlayStation) Adventure	3/22/96 CD-ROM
5	5	Tekken 2	Namco (PlayStation) Fighting	3/29/96 CD-ROM
6	-	ESPN Extreme Games	SCEI (PlayStation) Racing	5/24/96 CD-ROM
7	-	Dezaemon +	Athena (PlayStation) Game Construction	5/24/96 CD-ROM
8	7	Derby Stallion '96	ASCII (SuperFamicom) Simulation	3/15/96 Cartridge
9	6	Super Bomberman 4	Hudson (SuperFamicom) Action	4/26/96 Cartridge
10	-	Motor Toon Grand Prix 2	SCEI (PlayStation) Racing	5/24/96 CD-ROM

TOP 10 MOST WANTED

1	1	Final Fantasy VII	Square (PlayStation) RPG	12/96 CD-ROM
2	2	Dragon Quest III	Enix (SuperFamicom) RPG	?/96 Cartridge
3	3	Tokimeki Memorial	Konami (Saturn) Simulation	7/26/96 CD-ROM
4	4	Super Mario 64	Nintendo (Nintendo 64) Action	6/23/96 Cartridge
5	6	Virtual On	Sega (Saturn) Fighting	?/96 CD-ROM
6	9	Fighting Vipers	Sega (Saturn) Fighting	?/96 CD-ROM
7	8	Bio Hazard 2	Capcom (PlayStation) Action	?/96 CD-ROM
8	11	Street Fighter Zero 2	Capcom (Saturn) Fighting	August CD-ROM
9	9	NIGHTS	Sega (Saturn) Action	7/5/96 CD-ROM
10	14	Arc the Lad II	SCEI (PlayStation) RPG	August CD-ROM

COS-PLAY CONTEST



Hey hey hey! Remember the Cos-Play contest I ran a few issue back? I asked you guys to send in photos of game character costumes, but all I got was one! This brave guy is Brian Barkow of Green Bay, WI. His costume is Alex from Lunar the Silver Star. In Japan, they even have huge dance parties for Cos-Players... let's show the Japanese Cos-Players our American Spirits! Thanks, Brian. We'll send you a prize for your courage. Once we get enough entries, we'll run a contest.



We'd like our readers to send their opinions on Japanese games to Japan Now. Lately, quite a few excellent Japanese games have been released in the US, but many still remain in Japan. So, for those of you interested in Japanese games, please send letters for Japanese game companies to Japan Now, and I'll forward them to the proper third parties. Also, if you have any questions for your favorite Japanese game maker, just send them here and I'll do my best to have them answered.

TOP 10

Because of the sheer number of units in Japan, Super Famicom games are still very popular. Sega's stopped releasing adult games, but Nono Village's in 3rd... I bet lots of Japanese players are going to miss adult games on Saturn!

MOST WANTED

Games in the Final Fantasy and Dragon Quest series are always quite strong in the Japanese market. Many of you may be surprised, but the N64 isn't the most popular thing in Japan right now.

(INN) JAPAN NEWS NETWORK

SCE

SCE will lower the price of the PlayStation on June 22nd to ¥19,800. (\$198) I think Sony and Sega, who's already at the \$199 price point in Japan, are trying to prepare for the Nintendo 64. Also, SCE will start selling hit PlayStation titles for ¥2,800 (\$28) in a series called PlayStation: The Best in July.

NAMCO

This is still quite a rumor, but one of my sources said that Namco's making a fighting game and a racing game for the Nintendo 64. As you know, their huge titles in these genres are Ridge Racer and Tekken, but the N64 games will be totally original. I'll try and get more info on this subject ASAP.

TAKARA

Takara's announced three new Toshinden games for the fall: Nitoshinden, a sort of Toshinden Kids with a new game system and, reportedly, new characters; Toshinden U.R.A. for the Saturn, which runs in high-res mode, and Toshinden 2 Plus, which will have a block button and will be only ¥2,800.



Welcome, one and all, to the August edition of Other Stuff! I gotta tell you, it's been one heck of a crunch getting this issue together. With so much excitement following this year's E3 in

Los Angeles, and so many good games bombarding our offices, the general atmosphere has been one of awe. That old feeling seems to have returned, and I think it's safe to say we're finally at the "Next Level." Now, on with the show...

NINTENDO

At the Biltmore Hotel on the day before the E3, I stood, jittery, outside the main hall, amidst gaming press colleagues, talking with none other than Shigeru Miyamoto and Ken Lobb, both of Nintendo. While Mr. Miyamoto and Mr. Lobb were understandably excited, the rest of us were still in shock: Is the N64 finally here? Ready? Playable?

Off we went to the main hall, hundreds packing in from all over the world. Ken Lobb brought *Mario* up on the main screen and the crowd went silent. Dead silent. I was on my tippy-toes as he proceeded. *PilotWings 64*. *Shadows of the Empire*. Then it was over. The room erupted into a standing ovation. I changed my shorts.

Later in the day, Mr Miyamoto fielded queries from the press at an informal press conference, where he talked a bit about upcoming releases. He let slip an interesting little tidbit: If you beat *SM64* with 120 stars, Yoshi will appear somewhere deep in the game, though apparently he'll be difficult to find. Oh, and get this: *Super Mario 64 part 2* is already in development, using some of the concepts and level designs they didn't have room for in the first. Word is, it's not (I repeat, not) going to be a cartridge, but will be for the 64DD (otherwise known as the Bulky Drive). The final team for *SM64-2* has been finalized and it will be programmed at NCL, for a release near the end of '97.

Yoshi 64 is also in development, as is *Zelda 64*, which he says is set-up very similar to *Mario*, albeit with more of an action/RPG slant, of course. Nintendo is planning to have it ready for release simultaneously with the Bulky Drive, in early '97, after they are both debuted at the Shoshinkai, later this year. *F-Zero 2*, also being made for the 64DD, is now using the old *WaveRace* engine. (*WaveRace* is going with a new "jet-ski" engine.)

Three games were announced that will be 96-megs big. *Killer Instinct 2*, *Mortal Kombat*

64 and the game I can't wait to play, *Shadows of the Empire*. *KI2* was boosted to 96-megs in order to have 13 characters, instead of 10.

Konami Japan has signed to do 5 games: 1 soccer, 1 baseball, a mah-jong game, an adventure game (*Castlevania* is the rumor), and fifth, unknown, title, which some sources tell me is an RPG. Epoc, a Japanese anime company, is making *Doraemon*, based on the popular series in Japan. Paradigm reportedly has a pair of flight sims in progress, one for the N64, one for the 64DD.

All in all, for the N64 and the Bulky Drive, as of June first, Nintendo of America has over 50 titles in development, and 80 more are underway in Japan.

Mortal Kombat 4 Update!

MK4 will feature a million-and-a-half texture mapped polygons running at 60 fps. Sources at Midway tell me it's true 64-bit hardware, designed specifically for 3D games. They tell me it'll blow away Sega's Model 3 hardware, hands down. I guess we'll see, eventually. *MK4* is due in arcades in the first quarter of '97, after its debut at the AMOA show in February. Home versions are scheduled for N64 and PlayStation only, fourth quarter.

Sony, the one and only...

Sony's camp let me in on some news which is no surprise. A certain game Sony has just acquired has earned itself a sequel. One of the game's producers told me it'll improve graphically (is that even possible?!), and that blankity blank will likely have a female companion for a sidekick. We're talkin' late '97.

Motor Toon GP 2 has still not been confirmed for a U.S. release but if Sony doesn't pick it up, an interested third party I cannot disclose is ready to grab it. Bottom line, you'll be playing it later this year. *Arc the Lad* will be arriving stateside soon. No word yet on whether *Arc 2* will follow but I wouldn't be surprised if Sony either released them close together or better yet... together in one double CD. Of course that's pure speculation on my part. Rumor also has it that when *Tobal No. 1* is released here, it'll be packaged with a playable demo disc of *Final Fantasy VII*!

A Bit of Namco News

When *Tekken 2* was released in Japan recently, 400,000 copies sold out in a matter of days. To date, over 1.3 million copies have sold, making *Tekken 2* one of the biggest sellers ever for the PS. In *Soul Edge* news, the home version will be out in Japan in September, with the US version as far behind

as early '97. Namco will smartly ride the *Tekken 2* wave all the way into shore. A new arcade version (version "B") will reportedly hit arcades in July, with selectable bosses, a new juggle system, and possibly a new stage or two. Supposedly, the home versions will feature the new upgrades through the use of a code. Other Namco games headed the PlayStation's way include: *Ace Driver*, *Time Crisis*, *Prop Cycle*, *Dunk Mania*, *Prime Goal EX* and *Xevious 3D*. Namco's first virtual reality game, *VR Pac Man* will hit Japanese arcades this September. No word yet on an American release.

Capcom Goodies!!!

Word from Capcom has reached us that *Street Fighter 3* will appear in arcades in as little as 6 months, and, at 20 fps, will have about 3 times the amount of animation as *Alpha 2*! One of Capcom's producers has said that it will be the "ultimate 2D fighting game." Also, *Darkstalkers 3* will be in arcades (in Japan) in the next month or so, supposedly featuring Capcom's CPS3 hardware.

An arcade game which has been in development for more than 2 years is supposed to be out 'round year's end as well. *WarZard* is rumored to be the "next big thing" from Capcom, and it's said to break entirely new gaming ground. If anyone can pull that off, it's Capcom.

SF Alpha 2 should be out in the summer for PS and Saturn, and a Super Famicom version is planned for release shortly after. A U.S. *SF Alpha* release date (for Super Nintendo) is still unknown.

That's it! I'm Going to Recall...

Although getting Sega info's been like pulling teeth lately, I managed one tidbit: *War Gods* has been confirmed for a Saturn release around the end of the year, is being translated by Williams, and will feature characters that aren't available in the N64 or PS versions.

OOPS...

In last month's E3 coverage (which we whipped through to make press time), we have Capcom where LucasArts should be and Playmates in the Namco spot, oops. And finally this month, we'd like to apologize to Prima Publishing. In our June issue the maps used in the *Descent* layout were copyrighted by Prima Publishing. The maps came from *Descent: The Official Strategy Guide* published by Prima. We didn't intentionally snake the maps, one of our editors actually scanned them and failed to tell anyone. A big no-no. We have corrected the problem and thank Prima for being so understanding regarding this matter.



THESE SUPER FAMICOM SF ALPHA SHOTS LOOK MIGHTY TASTY!

Because OS cares, here's a pretty good idea of what's to come for the N64 (which I am most likely playing right now) and the 64DD. Enjoy!

Nintendo64 64DD

Technical Specs

PRICE: \$129.99 with Zelda 64 packed in (US version only).

AVAILABLE: Scheduled for unveiling at the Shoshinkai trade show in Japan this November, to release Spring 1997 Japan, Fall '97 America.

FEATURES:

A high-speed, mass-volume memory magnetic disk drive for use with the Nintendo64. Drive attaches to the bottom of the Nintendo64 console with 3-3/4" magnetic disks front-loaded into the unit. High-density magnetic disks hold 64MM of data—approximately 16 times the data contained in the SNES game *Killer Instinct*.

For the first time ever, gamers will be able to write data to game software. Players can customize and save characters and games.

Unparalleled data access

150 ms (milliseconds) Average Seek Time (AST), the amount of time it takes the device to find the particular data.

1 MB/s Data Transfer Rate (DTR), the rate at which data is transferred from source medium to internal memory.

Includes a 2 MB expansion RAM pack, which players install into the unique memory expansion slot of the N64 to further enhance the memory capacity of both the magnetic disks and the cartridges.

U.S. Nintendo 64 software release schedule

Title - Available - Game Type - Price - Memory - Developer

1. *Super Mario 64* - Sep 30th - 3D Action/Adventure - \$69.95 - 64megs - EAD
2. *PilotWings 64* - Sep 30th - 3D Flight Sim/Adventure - \$69.95 - 64megs - Paradigm
3. *WaveRace 64* - November - 3D Futuristic Boat Racing - \$69.95 - 64megs - R&D 2
4. *Body Harvest* - October - 3D Action - \$69.95 - 64megs - DMA
5. *Star Wars: SOTE* - Sep 30th - 3D Action/Adv/Simulation - \$79.95 - 96megs - LucasArts
6. *Cruisin' USA* - Sep 30th - 3D Racing - \$69.95 - 64megs - Williams
7. *TetrisPhear* - November - 3D Puzzle - \$69.95 - 32megs - H20
8. *Super Mario Kart R* - December - 3D Go-Cart Racing - \$69.95 - 64megs - R&D 2
9. *Killer Instinct 64* - October - 3D Fighting - \$79.95 - 96megs - Rare
10. *Blast Corps* - Sep 30th - 3D Bulldozer Action/Adv - \$69.95 - 64megs - Rare
11. *GoldenEye 007* - Nov/Dec - 3D Action/Adventure - \$69.95 - 64megs - Rare
12. *Buggie Boogie* - December - 3D Dune Buggie Shooter - \$69.95 - 64megs - Angel Studios
13. *Ken Griffey, Jr. 64* - December - 3D Sports/Baseball - \$69.95 - 64megs - Angel Studios
14. *Star Fox 64* - 1st quarter '97 - 3D Shooting - \$69.95 - 64megs - R&D 3
15. *Kirby's Air Ride* - 1st quarter '97 - 3D Air Boarding - \$69.95 - 64megs - R&D 1
16. *Creator* - 1st quarter '97 - 3D Mario Paint-type game - \$69.95 - 64megs - Software Creations

U.S. Nintendo 64 Third-Party Software Release Schedule

1. *Turok: DH* - Oct/Nov - 3D Action/Adventure - \$79.95 -

64megs - Iguana Entertainment

2. *Doom 64* - October - 3D Action/Adv/Shooting - \$79.95 -

64megs - Williams

3. *FIFA 64* - Dec/Jan - 3D Sports/Soccer - \$79.95 - 64megs - Electronic Arts

4. *Mission: Impossible* - 1st quarter '97 - 3D Action/Adv - \$79.95 - 64megs - Ocean

5. *Monster Dunk* - 1st quarter '97 - 3D Sports/Basketball - \$79.95 - 64megs - Mindscape

6. *Robotech: CD* - Nov/December - 3D Shooting - \$79.95 - 64megs - Gametek

7. *Freak Boy* - 1st quarter '97 - 3D Action/Adventure - \$79.95 - 64megs - Virgin

8. *Wayne Gretzky Hockey* - November - 3D Sports/Basketball - \$79.95 - 64megs - Williams

9. *MK Trilogy* - Nov/Dec - Fighting - \$79.95 - 96megs - Williams

10. *NBA Hangtime* - October - 3D Basketball - \$79.95 - 64megs - Williams

11. *Robotron X* - Dec/Jan - 3D Shooting - \$79.95 - 64megs - Player 1

12. *War Gods* - November - 3D Fighting - \$79.95 - 64megs - Williams

13. *Top Gear Rally* - 1st/2nd quar '97 - 3D Racing - \$79.95 - ? - Kemco

14. *Silicon Valley* - 2nd quarter '97 - 3D Action/Adv - \$79.95 - 64megs - BMG

15. *Ultra Combat* - 1st quarter '97 - 3D Fighting - \$79.95 - 64megs - GT Interactive

16. *Ultra Descent* - 1st quarter '97 - 3D Adventure/Shooting - \$79.95 - 64megs - Interplay

Japanese Nintendo 64 & Third-Party Software Release Schedule

1. *Super Mario 64* - June 23rd - 3D Action/Adventure - \$100.00 - 64megs - EAD

2. *PilotWings 64* - June 23rd - 3D Flight Sim/Adventure - \$100.00 - 64megs - Paradigm

3. *Seiko Habu Shogi* - June 23rd - Board Game -- \$100.00 - 64megs - Seta

4. *Cu-On-Pa* - September - 3D Puzzle - \$100.00 - 32megs - T&E Soft

5. *Neto Pro Baseball Stadium* - 4th quarter '96 - 3D Sports/Baseball - \$100.00 - 64megs - Imagineer

6. *Dynamite Soccer* - 4th quarter '96 - 3D Sports/Soccer - \$100.00 - 64megs - Imagineer

7. *Multi Racing* - 1st quarter '97 - 3D Racing - \$100.00 - 64megs - Imagineer

8. *Kaneda Ichi Shonen* - 1st/2nd quar '97 - 3D Text Adventure - \$100.00 - 64megs - Hudson

9. *Blade & Barrel* - 1st/2nd quar '97 - 3D Flight Sim/Shooter - \$100.00 - 64megs - Kemco

Japanese Nintendo 64 and Third-Party Software Release Schedule for the 64DD

1. *Super Mario RPG 64* - 1st quarter '98 - 3D Action/Adventure/RPG - \$50.00 - 64DD - Nintendo

2. *Mother 3* - 4th quarter '97 - 3D RPG - \$50.00 - 64DD - Nintendo

3. *Dragon Quest 7* - 2nd quarter '98 - \$50.00 - 64DD - Enix

4. *Tales of Phantasia 64* - 1998 - 3D Action/RPG - \$50.00 - 64DD - Namco

5. *F-Zero 2* - 3rd quarter '97 - 3D Racing - \$50.00 - 64DD - Nintendo

6. *Zelda 64* - December '96 - 3D Action/Adv/RPG - \$50.00 - 64DD - Nintendo

7. *Super Mario 64-2* - 1st/2nd quar '97 - 3D Action/Adventure - \$50.00 - 64DD - EAD

I'll have more next month. Note: Prices are based on current retail plans and are subject to change. I'm outta room! See you next month!

FIGHTING VIPERS

ITEMAUZO KORAI

P
PREVIEW



SEGA SATURN

DEVELOPER - AM2

PUBLISHER - SEGA

FORMAT - CD

OF PLAYERS: 1-2

DIFFICULTY - N/A

AVAILABLE - FALL



CAP'N SNAPPY

The incredible *Fighting Vipers* is almost here! Candy!! Candy!! I await thee!

Finally... actual Saturn shots of *Fighting Vipers*! Although only 40% complete, the home version of *FV* is already looking comparable to the juicy Model 2 coin-op.

For the poor saps out there who're unfamiliar with the arcade original, *Fighting Vipers* is a 3-D fighter in the tradition of *VF*, and has Punch, Kick, and Guard buttons. Unlike *VF*, however, there are no ring-outs—instead, each stage has four walls with which to pummel your opponent against until they pop amidst a shower of meaty triplets. Well, maybe without the popping part. This—and the extremely... uh, *original* characters—are what set *FV* apart from other super-realistic polygon fighters. Each character is also wearing armor that breaks (often revealing heaving bosoms and other assorted unmentionables) when it takes too many hits. Losing your armor, naturally, results in more damage for li'l ol' you.

The conversion from the Model 2 arcade board to Saturn seems to be coming along swimmingly, but one instantly noticable fact about these shots is that the game is currently running in the Saturn's low-res mode, while last year's *VF2* was in gleaming high-res. It is known that AM2 is using gouraud shading in this version... likely a factor in the resolution drop. We'll be back with more *Vipers* ASAP!

-Cap'n Snappy



WOLFINGER'S WALL



Camille from Manson, NC sends us this slightly under-developed Orchid... They say TV adds ten pounds.



Dallas Ragon from Havelock NC's awesome DBZ art.



Canada's Jaclyn Wismayer does Samurai 2 complete justice. Great shading! 3rd is yours! Your free GF sub is on the way.



Being an Alien is no fun at all. Those long fingers are too big for the buttons! Scott McMahon here, a WW regular!



Talk about action-packed! Michael Wright from Yonkers, NY sends us this fully loaded EWJ gone mad. Cool dude!



New York's Scott McMahon should be making shooters! Looks a little like 1941.



Hey! what's Mecha-Hermie doin' here?



The modest Sean Forsythe's amazing Celes and Fenrir is an amazing work of art. So amazing in fact that this month's WW is a tie. Your GF-T and subscription are on the way.



It's a tie for second as well! Jeez, I've been gone too long. Mike Lau's Hanzo and Galford, and Abraham Sterbenz' Seiken Densetsu 3 are equally stunning. Two T-Shirts please!



OK Dustin, you win. Your Mishima wins you a free subscription and a GF T-Shirt. Great work, great. Those electric beams look real.

Next month...Kevin Ray Johnson, a BIG Nelson Villanueva, and much, much more!

Dear Postmeister

I'd just like to start off by saying great job on being the only magazine with so much RPG coverage. No one gets the info like you guys. Any chance on getting a section devoted solely to RPGs, so we won't have to search through the whole magazine to find all RPG-related issues?

1) How would saving on RPGs on the PlayStation work if memory cards have such limited storage capabilities? It would seem you would have to buy a new memory card almost every day, or shut off the system, go back and delete all back-loaded data, and start again every thirty minutes. Is my reasoning way off, or do the games save repeatedly over one block of memory?

2) When is the exact release date of *Wipeout XL*? Any actual screen shots yet?

3) Why is the Sega Saturn getting all of the good PlayStation games (that were once exclusive) developed by third-party developers, when the PlayStation is getting absolutely NO games developed by third-parties that were once Saturn exclusive? To me, that's painfully cheap.

4) Why hasn't Sony tried to make Quest a third-party developer? In my opinion (and many others', too), Quest games are considered in the same reference as *Final Fantasy* games, though on a slightly lower scale.

5) When is *Romancing Sa•Ga 3* coming out on Windows '95? Has it even been announced?

6) How could *Resident Evil 2* improve upon the original's story and game play? I mean, *Resident Evil* is the point that all other puzzle-solving gore-fest games are trying to match these days, so how can Capcom actually top the original? It if can be done, Capcom is the only one able to do it!

7) Has Square officially announced any more PlayStation games other than *Final Fantasy VII* and *Ebol No.1*? If so, have any screen shots been released?

8) Why oh why is American box art just so, so, so, so BAD!?!?! I've written so many letters that I can't even keep track of why I said in the last one. I'm glad Capcom decided to improve upon the lack of good box art, but Sony and other game companies need to get with it!

Jess Kimball
Santa Barbara, CA

1) A memory card's just a memory card... You save your games onto one of the empty blocks, and that's it. It doesn't record the memory of the whole game, just the small save file.

2) *Wipeout XL* should be coming November/December-ish. Shots last issue!

3) Well, the PS got a few Saturn hand-me-downs. *Skeleton Warriors* and *X-Men*, for example, but it definitely does seem to go the other way. I guess the main reason is that most of the Saturn's great games are all by Sega themselves, and they sure aren't gonna port 'em over.



4) I'm sure they have (tried, I mean). The Ogre games are huge in Japan, and the third one is in development, but they haven't announced for what system yet. They did license out their older games, though, and Art Dink is busy making a PS version of *Ogre Battle* with polygon battle scenes, while *Riverhill* is working on both *Ogre Battle* and *Tactics Ogre* for the Saturn.

5) No announcement, just hints and speculation.

6) It could be longer, I suppose, and just have more of everything. The man behind *Resident Evil* actually said that the sequel would be "1.5 times better than the first" in an interview in a Japanese PlayStation magazine. Exactly 1.5 times better?

7) Heh, heh! Had to leave the typo on *Tobal #1* in there, 'cause it was just so funny... *Ebola #1*, the game where lethal bacteria fight it out in rendered Jack in the Box food products! Heh, heh (don't feel bad, the Postmeister foolishly referred to it as *Tobal Z* last issue). Anyway, those are the only two they've announced, but in their employee recruitment ads they've shown art and renders for *Seiken Densetsu 4* and one other game, which could possibly be *Chrono Trigger 2*, or something original.

8) At least Sony's heading in the right direction with their change to normal-sized CD jewel cases... Still working on the artwork part, though.

Dear Postman,
I have a few valuable questions that need to be answered. First off, as a proud PlayStation owner I am beginning to get worried about Namco's commitment to Sony. I heard that Namco recently made a deal with Nintendo to develop games for the N64. Will this affect Sony's relationship with Namco? I mean, with Namco's new System-33, there is no way the PlayStation can make arcade-perfect Namco games anymore. Unless they make a hook-up to advance polygon graphics like, or so I've heard, Sega is planning on releasing for *Virtua Fighter 3*.

What about System-22 games for the PlayStation? Can the system even support the power? I would love to see *Rave Racer* or *Time Crisis* for the PlayStation. Those games would destroy *Sega Rally* and *Virtua Cop*.

By the way, what other games will be on Namco's System-33?

Is Sony planning on a PlayStation 2 in the near future?

When is *Tekken 2* due in the US?

Is Namco even going to make an effort to develop *Tekken 3* for the PlayStation?

Is *Jumping Flash 2* coming to the states?

Thanks,
DJ Morani
Carver, MA

P.S. Don't feel bad, Art Warner. I know a lot of people who were conned into buying a Jaguar, including myself. I guess we all learned a valuable lesson, Atari "sucks" at math!

Those are some valuable questions indeed! That Namco is working on Nintendo64 games is still just a rumor, but *Tekken 3* is coming for PlayStation, and that has been announced. So, though it most likely won't be on PlayStation hardware, it sounds as if Sony's relationship with Namco couldn't be any peachy-keener... peachier-keener? Peachier-keen? Ah, that one works!

The System-22 games haven't been announced for anything yet... Namco would have to redo them from scratch on the ol' PS (or whatever format), something they haven't had to do in a long time. System-33 is still just a rumor, but the only title we've heard yet is *Tekken 3*.

Tekken 2 is coming October/November, *Jumping Flash! 2* is August/September, and *Soul Edge* (you didn't ask, but I can tell you were thinking it) is coming next year.

That's a long wait for *Tekken 2*, but don't despair, proud Jaguar owner! Maybe you and Art can get together and go a few rounds at *Fight For Life*... Heh, heh...

Dear Postmeister,
Hey buddy, you know sooner or later you're going to have to print one of my letters... Especially since my name is "Titanic Lance." I'd like to start off with saying that your section is my favorite in the whole mag... I gotta get my monthly fix of information, rumors, pleas, complaints, etc. Anyway, check out this letter. I have short questions, but I've got quite a few. Please help me out if you can.

1) First of all, I would really like to know how much longer are the Sega Genesis and Super Nintendo systems going to be manufactured? If you don't know, what's your best guess?

2) On the subject of the 16-bit kings, answer me this: What is the approximate lifespan of video games/video game systems? I have a Genesis and SNES... how much longer can I expect them to last? Do these systems keep going and going or do they last a certain number of years and then conk out?

3) *Ganbare Goemon* for the Japanese PlayStation looks incredible. Is there any chance of it coming out for the Japanese Saturn (let alone any American systems)?

4) I saw the photos of the upcoming *Sonic 4*, and it looks all 3D-ish. Yuck! Any chance of a NORMAL side-scrolling *Sonic* for any systems?

5) Postmeister, you'll probably agree with me on this: damn it, I want to see a brand new Saturn *Castlevania* and *Ghouls 'n Ghosts*! By the way, what would you think of a 32-bit *Demon's Crest 2*? Also when is Capcom going to make 32-bit versions of *Captain Commando* and *Cadillacs & Dinosaurs*?

6) Now we move on to the "shooter" segment of modest questionnaire. What's the deal with Konami putting *Parodius* in "limbo"? What does this mean? Hey, us shooter-addicts need a humorous off-beat shooter to balance out the hard-core alien blasting... I'm starting to see *R-Type* spaceships flashing on my wall. I'm having muscle spasms, and I NEED *Parodius* to soothe my nerves!

7) I heard about a Saturn vertical-scrolling shooter called *Don Pachi*. Has GameFan reviewed this yet, or are you going to?

8) Are the *Gradius Deluxe Pack* and *Twin Bee Deluxe Pack* coming to the American Saturn?

Will GameFan be reviewing the *Twin Bee Deluxe Pack*? Also, any word on a *Salamander (Life Force) Deluxe Pack*?

9) Is the Japanese Saturn game *Darius* the same as *Darius Gaiden*? Is *Shin Shinobi Den* the same as *Shinobi Legions*?

10) Will GameFan be reviewing the Japanese Saturn games *Geockers*, *Steamgear Mash*, and *Blue Seed*? Briefly, could you tell me what kinds of games these are? Shooters, RPGs, fighters...?

11) Regarding Saturn, will any future games by any companies besides SNK be using the dual CD/cartridge format? Also, do you feel this capability gives Saturn an edge over other systems?

12) Lastly, I would just like to make a comment. Ready? I really, really hate 3-D games! I started off just ignoring them, but now they are invading my favorite platform titles! For example, I love games like *Zelda: Link to the Past*, *Super Mario World*, and *Final Fantasy II-III*. Now, I see the new N64 versions coming out, and they look nothing like the originals! I am SO GRATEFUL that Capcom is making traditional sequels to games, like

Mega Man 8 and *X4*, without jumping onto the N64 3D bandwagon. Despite all the N64 hype, HEAR ME world! I will NEVER buy a N64! NEVER!! Long live Capcom and the Sega Saturn! (and PlayStation, I guess.)

Well, that's it for me. Thanks for listening, man.

"Titanic Lance"

Ventura, CA

Yeah, I can't resist a name like that... Heh, I won't even ask...

1) *I don't know for sure, but I'd be surprised if they're still selling Genesis systems in '97. The Super NES will probably last a bit longer, though.*

2) *That's a good question... I guess if properly taken care of, there's no reason they won't last another ten years or so.*

3) *Both are extremely unlikely.*

4) *Afraid not...*

5) *I am SO with you on all of those points... Hey, we're getting some screwed up Ghouls 'n Ghosts puzzle game, whoopee.*



Demon's Crest 2 is a good idea, but you'll never see Captain Commando or Cadillacs & Dinosaurs, I'd bet. I mean, Capcom cancelled D&D Towers of Doom, which is a lot more recent (and BETTER) than either of those two.

6) *I feel your pain. But that's really all I can say.*

7) *It was a perfect arcade translation, but it was an older, boring shooter that's really just another Raiden ripoff. We decided not to even review it.*

8) *No plans for releasing either deluxe pack here... We did review Twin Bee Deluxe Pack 5 or 6 issues ago, it was cool but way too short. No official announcement of a Salamander Deluxe Pack, but you know it's gonna happen.*

9) *Darius Gaiden has the same name in Japan; Shin Shinobi Den is indeed Shinobi Legions.*

10) *Geockers was lame, so we cut it from the mag. We did review Blue Seed and Steamgear Mash in the past. They're a mediocre RPG game and a good isometric action game, respectively.*

11) *SNK might on Samurai Shodown III. I*

wish Capcom would on Marvel Superheroes!

Dear Postmeister,

I want to commend you guys for producing the best game mag in the universe. Also, thanks for adding an anime section (it's about time someone did, video games and anime are very closely related). Here are a few questions I need to have answered.

1) SQUARE's move to Sony: Does this mean no SQUARE games on N64 ever? What about the 64-bit *Mario RPG* they were going to start working on?

2) The N64 Disk Drive: Will this be more of a technical upgrade than just increased internal RAM (ie: increased polygon producing capabilities or even more cool visual effects)?

3) M2 vs N64: I don't see why everyone is so concerned about which one is more powerful. There won't be a noticeable difference, unless it's an FMV title (which I don't care for). The best system will be decided by SOFTWARE, not hardware.

4) What are the possibilities of there being 64-bit sequels to *Metroid*, *Actraiser*, or *Contra*?

5) What's happening with *Robotech*, *Monster Dunk*, or *Top Gun* for N64? I haven't heard about them in months.

6) Which takes up more storage space on a cartridge (or CD), pre-rendered CG or graphics produced by the hardware (I think it's called "on the fly")?

7) *Turok* looks great. Why do I keep hearing about third-party companies having trouble making good games for N64?

1) *I don't know about ever, but it's looking really unlikely now! Mario RPG 2 is still going to happen, but Nintendo will do it internally this time.*

2) *It will have more RAM, and play discs that can store 8 times as much memory as the average cartridge, but there's been no word as of yet on any sort of technical upgrades.*

3) *Very true!*

4) *Metroid—very probably. Actraiser—maybe. Quintet, makers of this fine product, are currently working on a new game in the Soulblazer/Illusion of Gaia/Tenchi Sozo series, but we don't know what system it's for yet. Contra's coming for 32-bit, no word on a 64-bit one.*

5) *They're all still in development, as far as I've heard. The only one I've seen is Robotech which is still super early.*

6) *Pre-rendered CG (and hand-drawn graphics) take up MUCH more memory. For that sort of thing, the disc has to contain pictures of every single frame of animation possible for the character. But with 3D models, all it really needs to keep in memory is the texture and shape of each polygon piece.*

7) I guess some companies have more trouble with it than others? Hey Postmeister!

Last issue someone totally bashed the PlayStation and it's games, "a bunch of mediocre games better left unplayed," was how he worded it. Puh-leeze! Just wait 'til *Final Fantasy VII* comes along-then he might reconsider. Oh, and let's not forget the amazing *Crash Bandicoot*, and maybe if we're lucky-*Genso Suikoden*! I really wish Saturn owners would stop bashing PlayStations, and vice versa. (Can't we all just get along?) In my opinion, they're both great systems. And let's face it: in a few years we'll drop them and move on to 64 or 128-bit. So let's shut up and play.

Now that that's off my chest, I'd like to say this magazine is the best in the business and I really love reading the letters column. Oh yeah, and the Anime Fan too. Now for the important stuff:

- 1) When (or is it if) will *Chrono Trigger 2* come out, and for what systems?
- 2) Do you speak French? Comment ca va?
- 3) How about *Sailor Moon Super S*? Will we see it here?
- 4) Why on Earth is *Mortal Kombat 4* coming out? I mean, it's a pretty cool game, but enough's enough.
- 5) I guess *Hermie Hopperhead* should be released here so that guy doesn't have to put it in every issue. I feel bad for him. Well, that's about all. I suppose I'll be a happy girl gamer when all those delightful RPGs come out and female fighters aren't so scantily clad.

Au revoir!

Alison "Ali" Cappellieri
Danbury, CT

Tout suit, je parle francais! Ca va bien! Comme ci comme ca! Je suis un petit jambon! J'ante allouete j'ante allouete j'ante pleu medi! Du rien! Chien wa mal! Mise-en-abin! Arc de Triomphe! Le Tour de Eiffel! Non! Prete-a-porter! Arrete vous! Respondez sil vous plait! Mi casa es su casa! (um, no that's not right...) Okay, maybe I don't speak French.

Chrono Trigger 2 is coming for the PlayStation, don't know when, but soon. Maybe Spring '97? (in Japan) No Sailor Moon Super S here, sorry... I'll inform "that guy" (my BOSS) that you sympathize with his plight!

Dear Postmeister,

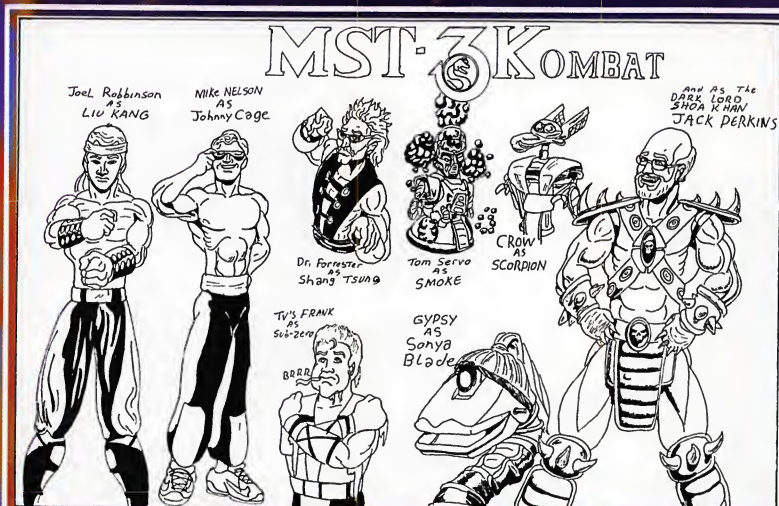
As the proud new owner of a PlayStation, I thought I'd write you a letter. I've got a few questions for ya:

- 1) What does PCM stand for?
- 2) " " is the difference between Gouraud-shading and texture mapping?
- 3) To all PSX owners: write Konami USA and demand *Genso, Snatcher, and Policenauts*!
- 4) Will *Wild Arms* come to the US?
- 5) If Nintendo claims the N64 will have CD quality sound, why do I keep reading about everyone saying the PSX sound is superior?

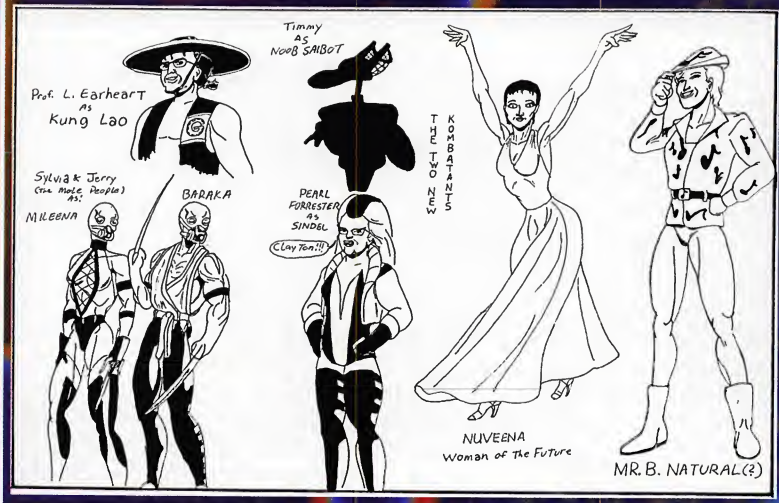
6) Any chance *FFVII* will come her before summer '97?
Mike Best
Anaheim, CA

I can't believe you took the time to write me a letter, but couldn't take the time to write the word "what" again on question 2. Do you realize how sad that is? Would it really take so much out of your day, so much out of your life, to write the same 4-letter word twice? Hmmp. Well, as the last remaining kind and forgiving postal worker, I'll answer your questions anyway.

- 1) PCM stands for, I believe, Pulse Code Modulation. How 'bout that!
- 2) Gouraud shading changes the colors within a texture to give it a rounded appearance, whereas texture mapping is a flat picture on a flat surface. Texture maps are much more detailed, but look blocky. The best way to understand the difference is to just compare *Tekken 1* (gouraud-shaded) and *Tekken 2* (texture-mapped).
- 3) *Genso's* and *Policenauts* are both coming out this year!
- 4) I haven't heard anything.
- 5) While it may have CD quality sound on paper, the N64 doesn't really have the memory (neither the in-system RAM nor the ROM space on the cartridge) for the type of redbook and streamed music tracks we all enjoy on the Saturn and PS. The music through its internal PCM sounds pretty good, though.
- 6) We've heard rumors of a March release. Still just rumors, though.



Okay, I'll be the first to admit that there are probably about 6 people who are familiar enough with Mystery Science Theater 3000 to actually appreciate this, but it happens to be my favorite show, and I'm giving it half a page, 'cause I'm the Postmeister, and that's just how much power I possess. Anyway, this comedy masterpiece (Timmy as Noob Saibot! It's brilliant!) was sent to us in an envelope with no letter and no return address, from Marysville, CA. I hope the responsible party will come forward and receive their rightful billing as our generation's only true comedy genius.



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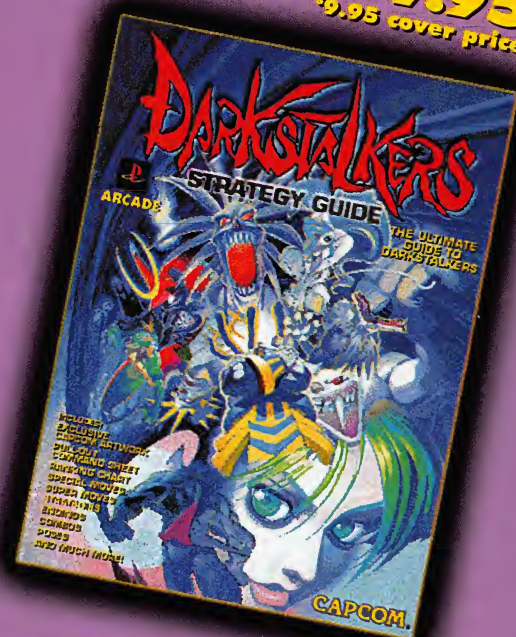
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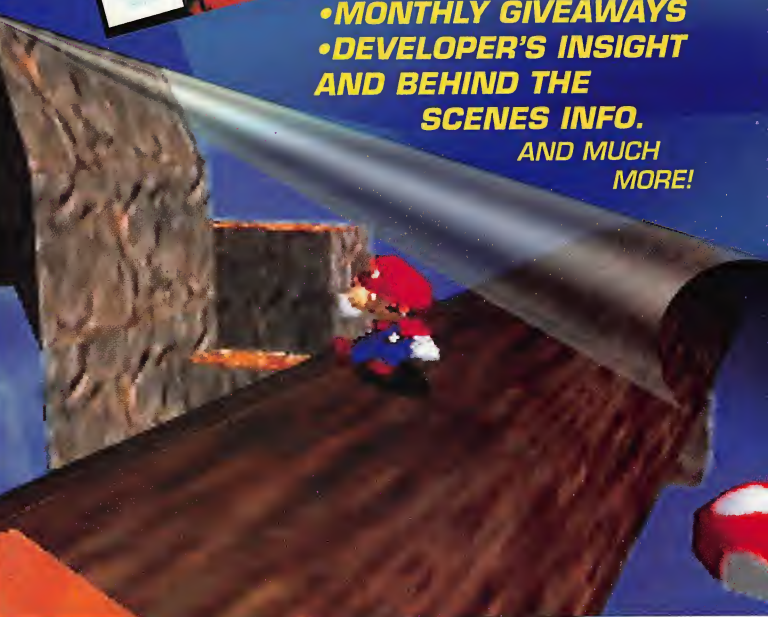
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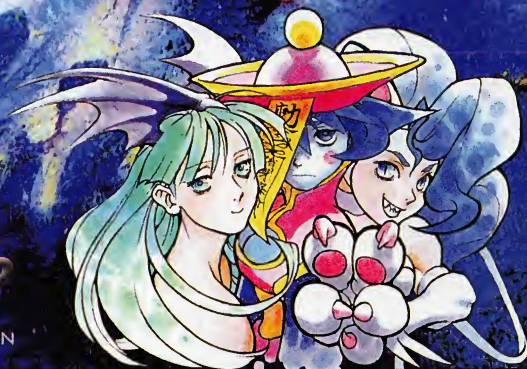
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